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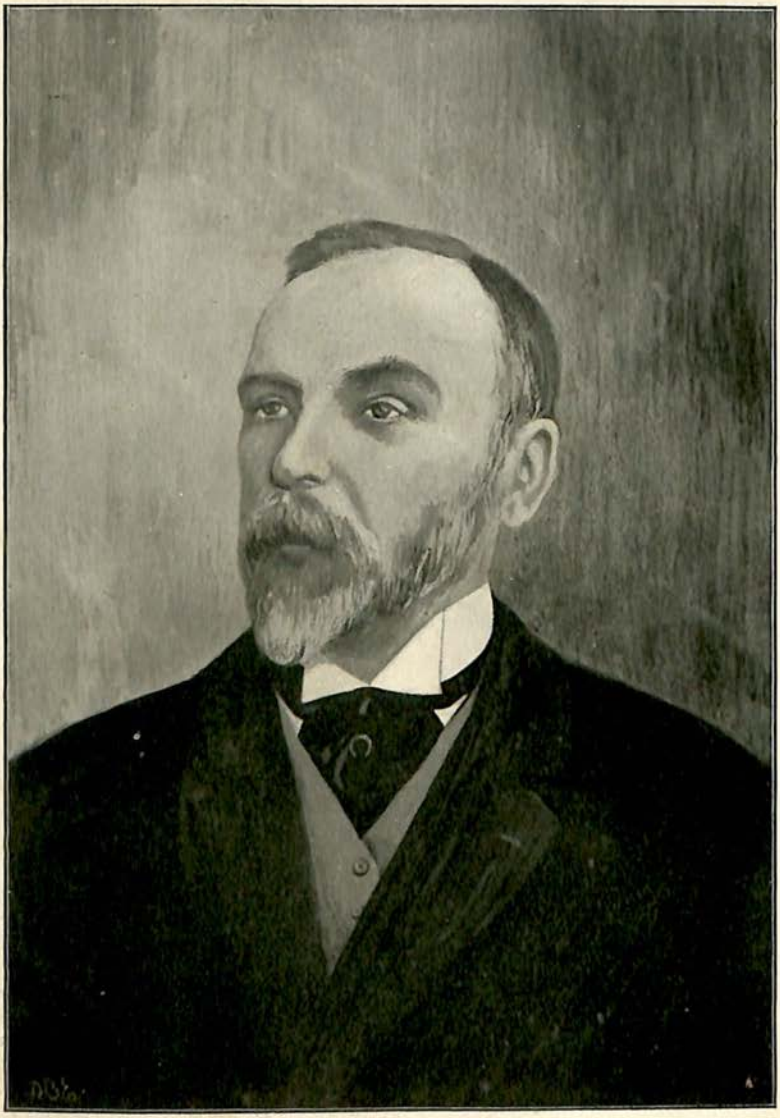
IRISH CONSPIRACIES



JOHN MALLON
(1882).

[*To face title page.*

IRISH CONSPIRACIES

RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN MALLON

(The Great Irish Detective)

AND OTHER REMINISCENCES

BY

FREDERICK MOIR BUSSY

LONDON:

EVERETT & CO.,

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PREFACE

In the preparation of these few chapters, dealing with strenuous times in Ireland, I have honestly endeavoured to avoid pressing unnecessarily, or too heavily, upon the tender susceptibilities of anyone. I hope none will feel aggrieved, whose feelings should have been respected. If, unhappily, such there be, I beg them to believe that I have set down nought in malice.

F. M. B.

CLAPHAM PARK
May, 1910.

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IRISH CONSPIRACIES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: IS THERE A MORAL?

IN Dublin, the capital of "The Sister Isle," within eight hours of our Metropolis, I have seen the police smash the heads of the people and kick women and girls on the side-walk of the principal street; I have seen the soldiers of an English regiment bayonet unarmed men and boys by the score. I saw the Royal Irish Constabulary, a body under the control of the British Cabinet, at Glenbeigh, assist at the atrocious ceremony of pouring petroleum on the thatched roofs of peasant homesteads and setting light to it, and at the use of the battering-ram and the crowbar to demolish the walls of miserable hovels that were all the poor creatures had to put between their aged parents, their hungry children and the weather; I saw buckshot poured into women and striplings, at Belmullett, and I inspected a triangular cut in the clothing of a young maiden who had been transfixed to the ground by a policeman's bayonet that had entered her body through the back. I have found vast sections of the inhabitants of Ireland literally starving; I have come across whole country-sides that were never prosperous. I have witnessed the trial of the would-be saviours of these people

for their liberty, and I have been a spectator when weaker natures amongst them, driven desperate, have been arraigned for their lives. I have marvelled at the system of "challenging" jurymen that subsisted and which no untutored mind could discriminate from a process of "packing."

Looking back, I am forcibly reminded of words spoken by Lord Brougham, in 1828:

> "In my mind, he was guilty of no error, he was chargeable with no exaggeration, he was betrayed by his fancy into no metaphor, who once said that all we see about us—Kings, Lords and Commons, the whole machinery of the State, all the apparatus of the system and its various workings, end in simply bringing twelve good men into a box."

Conditions are seemingly better now—for a while, may be—but should such things ever have been? What are the guarantees for the future?

The cabin dwellers of Glenbeigh were abandoned to the wrecker's devices because the hand of God had fallen heavily upon them and they were temporarily unable to pay rent for bleak patches of the rugged mountain side and sodden stretches of the valley, which their hourly, daily, yearly, everlasting toil, and the sweat of their ancestors, had brought into a condition capable of producing a few potatoes. An old woman and a mere girl were done to death, and a posse of lads were peppered in the backs with lead, at Belmullett, because they had gathered to jeer a demonstration by the armed forces of the British Crown to coerce people, in actual want of food, to pay *poor rates*—people who were hungry and had not even been taught to speak the language of the Power that sought to dragoon them. Think of it! Surely this was as bad as Denishwai,

and, God knows, there never was an Administrative act that more loudly called for vengeance than that ghastly scandal of the Nile Valley. When I wrote of these things, at the time, one fat and fattening newspaper in London refused to print my "copy," and I was reminded that I was not writing for *The Clan-na-Gael*. No wonder! The bare, naked truth was unbelievable by those who did not know.

True, if there is any excuse in drink, then the excuse was there at Belmullett right enough. Most of the uniformed band had bottles with them when they set out on their mission. I and another correspondent found the "empties" along the line of march. But perhaps the greatest danger when there are such heroics to be performed—the risk so certain to be followed by disaster—is to be found in the system which permits such a body of men, armed with tempered steel prongs and a prodigious supply of ball and buckshot cartridges, to set out under the command of one of the immature cocks-o'-the-walk they call "sub-inspectors" in the country districts of Ireland. These fledglings are usually young elegants with very little training, less ballast and no experience of real life, and the sabres in their hands, on such occasions, if not a positive danger to themselves, are an alarming menace to the community amongst whom they move. Certain it is that the shocking outrages of Glenbeigh and Belmullett could not have happened had Resident Magistrate Considine, in the one case, and County-Inspector Owen, in the other, been there. They came upon the scenes after the happenings had appalled the conscience of the whole civilized world, and the opinion I have just expressed is the opinion uttered to me by those gentlemen as to the incidents in which they were interested.

The best part of a century before the unhappy occurrences I have mentioned, England and Scotland succeeded in buying up the independent local government of the Irish people in order to throw their benevolent, protecting wing over the land. What result has Britain to show? The only apparent, indisputable effect of her flaunted promises —the only result she can point to is that, during the latter half of the term, a population of over eight millions of comparatively prosperous and not altogether unhappy souls were " governed " away to less than five millions in a state of periodical starvation. Surely that whole term of government in Ireland is one lurid chapter of drivel, drift and dragoon, to which, of late years, has been added tardy compliance.

Even in the little things of every-day administration, the same decadence of the powers of realization and appreciation, the same ineptitude is observable. Take the times when great distress has prevailed and simple humanity has caused rescue-works to be decided upon. The conduct of the business has been placed in the hands of that comic-relief in the tragedy of misgovernment—the Irish Board of Works. It has been agreed to build fishing slips, to aid the poor fishermen of the West Coast, and, at the same time, to improve their facilities for getting to and from their usual work; and to make roads. I cannot hope that anyone will believe me without having seen for themselves, but it is none the less the fact that these Pooh-Bahs of Irish administration have succeeded in surpassing themselves in the worthlessness of the works they caused to be put up and the ridiculousness of the sites they selected. Some of them are positively added dangers to the existing, none too desirable or generously secure, refuges provided by nature. Most of them have never had, and probably never will have, a rope thrown

round the holdfasts that are supposed to be intended for such use. Occasionally one of them has been blown down, or washed away—without a tear or a sigh of regret, be it said—by the first tide a little out of the ordinary. I have seen cows grazing on the tufts of grass growing up between the cobble-stones with which they are paved. "Relief roads" that I have inspected lead to nowhere.

Benjamin Disraeli declared, in the early forties, that Ireland was groaning under the "worst possible form of executive government in the world," but he never did much to mend that state of things when he got the opportunity, and nothing has been effected in that regard by any other minister or ministry unless it be to thrust Ireland more prominently on to the point of English political party divergence.

Next came the stinging words of John Bright, addressed to Gladstone, in 1866:

> "I should like to ask him whether this Irish question is above the stature of himself and of his colleagues? If it is, I ask them to come down from the high places which they occupy and try to learn the art of legislation and government before they practise it. I myself believe, if we could divest ourselves of the feelings engendered by party strife, we might come to some better result."

Appealing to Gladstone and Disraeli, he continued:

> "But suppose it was possible for these men, with their intellects, with their far-reaching vision, to examine this question thoroughly, and to say for once, whether this leads to office and to the miserable notoriety that men call fame which springs from office or not, 'If it be possible, we will act with loyalty to the Sovereign

and justice to the people; and if it be possible we will make Ireland a strength and not a weakness to the British Empire.' It is from this fighting with party, and for party, and for the gains which party gives that there is so little result from the great intellect of such men as these."

And again:

"All history teaches us that it is not in human nature that men should be content under any system of legislation and of institutions such as exist in Ireland. . . . I say there is a mode of making Ireland loyal. I say that the Parliament of England, having abolished the Parliament of Ireland, is doubly bound to examine what that mode is, and, if it can discover it, to adopt it. I say that the minister who occupies office in this country merely that he may carry on the daily routine of administration, who does not grapple with this question, who dares not go into opposition, and who will sit anywhere except where he can tell his mind freely to the House and to the country, may have a high position in the country, but he is not a statesman, nor is he worthy of the name."

But what was the concrete good of all this, obvious and searching as it was? England was content to wait, with the utmost self-consciousness, for more wrecked homes, more deserted hearths, more of the desperation of despair. At last came the inevitable rising, with its wholesale imprisonments, its crop of executions, its manufacture of loathsome *mouchards* and informers, its "Manchester Martyrs," and the blowing-up of a London prison. And then Gladstone calmly told the country that it was that

last act, and that alone, that had brought the Irish question "within the sphere of practical politics."

Later, we have the broad, rough story of the Land League. Again the people are bludgeoned, in and out of season, and there is coercion galore. That last resource of reckless incompetence in government, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—for that is what the "Suspects Act" amounted to—is requisitioned, the gaols are pitifully overcrowded, and, when the last possible turn of the screw has been given, the dormant faculties of the Administration return. They suddenly awaken to what they seem to have thought the trivial circumstance, that there is simple justice behind the claims of the Land Leaguers, and Gladstone enters into a treaty with Mr. Parnell, who is one of his recklessly incarcerated prisoners at the time, that there shall be a drastic Land Act passed into law. But the land agitation has brought with it in its train a revengeful spirit. There are those amongst its camp followers with the minimum of constitutional virtue, as there are in all such great national movements for equitable reform all the world over, and as there has been at such times since the world began, and as there will be until it moves off its axis. The fatal, wanton (although inevitable) blow fell in the Phœnix Park. Within four years Gladstone is moved to attempt the restoration of the Irish Parliament. True, the effort failed, for a time, because the Liberal leader was deserted by some of his chief lieutenants, and although there was little wonder that the Marquis of Hartington failed to see eye to eye with him, mere political pique and a large slice of political sycophancy may safely be accredited with responsibility for the balance. All the same, the Irish question once again came "within the sphere of practical politics."

It is significant that even Mr. Chamberlain, so recently

as twelve months before the introduction of Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill, which he subsequently helped to defeat, delivered himself as follows:

> "I do not believe that the great majority of Englishmen have the slightest conception of the system under which this free nation attempts to rule the sister country. It is a system which is founded on the bayonets of thirty thousand soldiers encamped permanently as in a hostile country."

And as lately as 1903, Mr. Arthur James Balfour was fain to admit that the Irish land system was,

> "Intolerable and absurd; the worst in any civilized country in the world."

Where are we now? Is it possible for the existing methods to lead us away from the humiliating finality pictured by Brougham? How far has the executive government of Ireland been refined or gilded since it was scoffed at by Disraeli? Are the contemptible wrigglings and wrestlings and introversions and somersaultings for place and profit that mark our Parliamentary system to-day any better than when Bright mocked them? Must we go on driving people to the devil before reforms are brought "within the sphere of practical politics"? Were the old giants altogether without wisdom? Does courage fail our modern political gladiators?

All the lessons teach us the same thing. In the handling of relatively puny grievances experience shows us the identical, hopeless, woeful way. Miss Lydia Becker and her associates worked for years to bring the claims of women constitutionally to the better understanding of our legislators—the claims of women who are taxed the same as men and who contribute to the upkeep of the State

like men. Samuel Smith and his resolution became hardy annuals; there was an amusing discussion, the House enjoyed a hearty after-dinner laugh, the Ministry, whichever party was in office, shrugged its shoulders, and the question was shelved. Now that Lydia Becker's successors have recognized the utter futility of argument, and the smacking of policemen, the use of the dog-whip, the breaking of windows and the harrying of ministerial gatherings have taken the place of a dignified course, and crowds of women have been clapped into prison, the unthinking raise their hands and protest: "What very dreadful persons!" but the Premier rubs his eyes and begins to talk about effecting "something." Mr. Plimsoll foamed at the mouth on the floor of the House of Commons and outraged every rule of order and decorum cherished in that assembly, and then the Government consented to stop the sending of "coffin-ships" to sea. Mr. Bradlaugh struggled with policemen and attendants within the sacred precincts of the "Popular Chamber," and the Sergeant-at-Arms, with drawn sword, marched him off to durance vile in the Clock Tower, but the uncanny "scenes" led to the abolition of the oath for those who had conscientious objections to it. The longbeards and cranks "passively resisted" and forced a few inglorious mock-auctions that scandalized the "unco'-guid," but they won their point, to the extent of seeing a bill introduced that aimed at the confiscation of the property and the rights of others. No doubt when someone starts kicking in the sides of the Agapemone there will be arrests, and sentences out of all proportion to the offence, and then we shall have the cleansing of that Augean stable, and the removal of a festering spot that shocks the feelings and sentiments of every decent-living person in the land.

Take the reverse of the plagueful picture. Ever since

the Income Tax was first introduced by Pitt, at the end of the eighteenth century, and through the many years it was in operation during the nineteenth, it was admitted to be an unfair impost and a charge that ought not, under any circumstances, to be considered an integral portion of our fiscal system. Sir Robert Peel promised it should only be a temporary tax, and I believe I am right in saying, almost without exception, throughout all the years since then, successive Chancellors of the Exchequer apologized for it, undertook that it should be only temporary, and concurred in the opinion that, in any case, it could not be allowed to rest upon a system of exemptions—that any form of direct taxation should be nearly as universal in its operation as indirect taxation. Well! there has been no very hard kicking about the Income Tax in the past —that is to say, there has been no physical violence and no flinging of masses of persons into dungeons over it—and, accordingly, up jumps Mr. Asquith, at the commencement of the twentieth century, with the placid declaration that the Income Tax must be regarded as a permanent portion of our policy, and he proceeds to enlarge the exemptions until the whole terrible burden is taken off the shoulders of the many and crushingly weighted upon the few.

Is there a moral in all this? If we can discern it, in the name of reason let us apply it! Is it not rank treason to the trust they have undertaken that our statesmen, if such there be either in office or in opposition, should wait for coercion before doing right?

CHAPTER II

JOHN MALLON: POLICEMAN

A GOOD deal of this book is made up of my "Recollections of John Mallon." Any and every statement it contains relating to Irish criminology that can offer a semblance of justification for the contents-bill headline, "Revelations," even in the smallest type, is based upon facts supplied to me by John Mallon in the course of numerous conversations extending over many years.

That being so, it seems reasonable that I should lead off by introducing this remarkable policeman—or, in any case, that I should endeavour to familiarize his personality so far as a few "side-lights" will permit.

Mallon is a Catholic and a good Catholic; he is an Irish Nationalist and a good Irish Nationalist. I believe he has always been so. There are many people who think he would probably have been a Fenian—and he would have made a formidable Fenian—had he not drifted into the police, but I am not of them. My reasons for believing the contrary will soon appear.

Mallon was born in Armagh, the county whence sprung the patron saint of Ireland, St. Patrick, but it must not be supposed that the banishment of "all the snakes and toads" by the holy man had any part in actuating Mallon to become a hunter of criminals. It is a remarkable fact, however, that the County Armagh has supplied the world with many famous detectives, not the least of whom were

Burns, chief of the Criminal Investigation Department in New York, McAlway of that in Glasgow, and Kelly of that in Chicago, while the best man Pinkertons had during the Molly Maguire riots was also a countyman of the saint's, named McMahon.

Meigh, where Mallon was born, is a straggling village at the southern end of the "Gap of the North," which in the battling days of creed hatred appears to have proved a strategic position, dividing the Orangemen of the north from the Catholics. Whilst yet a youth, in the bud of manhood, having left school and commenced to think things for himself, Mallon, who had heard "whisperings" and "mutterings" amongst the young fellows with whom he associated, approached his father, as he worked on his small farm, and said: "Father, secret societies are bad, are they not?" The older man rested with his foot on his spade and thought for a minute or so. There came into his eyes a curious glint that the son had not often noticed before, as he waved his arm in the direction of the hamlets and irregular homesteads that dotted the country-side and said: "Those houses you see beyond would not be there to-day if it were not for the Ribbon Society." That was not quite what the youngster had expected. He was disappointed, and he replied: "Ah! father, you cannot get away from the recollection that the O'Neill massacred the Protestants away over there because he was afraid that the Protestants might one day become powerful enough to put the Catholics to death; but surely that was no justification?" "Very well, let it remain there," was all the old fellow answered, and he went on digging, and the subject was for ever afterwards a closed book for father and son. John Mallon pondered deeply over the circumstances by which a young Irishman was surrounded; over the divergent paths that lay open to him. He recog-

nized that his religion taught him to obey the laws as he found them, and he decided to throw in his lot on the side of order. Hence his decision to join the Royal Engineers, for which he conceived he was well fitted. On his way to Dublin to put his plan into execution and "take the shilling," he met a local landlord, who, hearing his intention, advised him to join the police, and furnished him with an introduction to Sir Henry Lake, an old army colleague, who was at the moment the Chief Commissioner of Police. That was in November, 1858, and he at once became a copying clerk in Sir Henry Lake's office—a position of considerable trust as many most important and confidential documents were constantly passing through his hands. He was a fine, handsome young fellow, quick-witted, zealous, and, beyond all, a monument of discretion. Little wonder that his promotion was unusually rapid. In 1861, he was appointed confidential clerk to "Dan" Ryan, at the time superintendent of the Detective Department, and in 1869, when he had only been in the service ten years and nine months he was promoted to inspector. He was exceptionally young for the appointment—becoming the youngest officer of the rank in the service—but already his public worth was leaking out, for the *Freeman's Journal*, commenting upon the matter, declared: "Mr. Mallon is a young officer who, in trying times, has shown himself worthy the confidence of his superiors." When, in 1874, Sir Henry Lake recommended him over the heads of many seniors to succeed Ryan, who had resigned, he referred to some conversation he had had with Mr. Thomas Burke, the Under-Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and said to his *protégé:* "I was jealous to hear the good things he said about you, but I was proud to think that I had secured a young officer in whom the Government had so much confidence."

"John Mallon is worthy of any position the Government has it in its power to give that he is able to fill," reported Sir David Harrel, who had succeeded to the Chief Commissionership, years later, in reply to the envious criticisms of some Castle officials, when this man, who had risen from the ranks, was chosen for the position of Assistant Commissioner. This final promotion constituted, I believe, a record in the police service, and it is impossible to imagine any finer testimony to the merits and the invaluable services of John Mallon.

Undoubtedly Mallon had exceptional advantages in regard to his training as a policeman. His position as confidential clerk to Ryan brought him into direct touch with Sir Henry Lake and the law officers of the Crown, and in addition to this, his chief, although a shrewd and persevering officer, with a keen sense of morality, was not a particularly well educated man, and he was verging on the "sere and yellow leaf." There was a disposition, therefore, to delegate a good deal of his active work to his more youthful and eminently presentable assistant. "Here, John, avick, you'd better look into this," became quite a familiar expression of Ryan's. And it was by that means that Mallon first came into contact with Pierce Nagle, the informer at the time of the *Irish People* raid, with whom he had secret meetings every week for a considerable time, and the woman who warned the police of the identity of Kelly, the Fenian organizer, who had been arrested in Manchester as a vagrant, and of the subsequent plot to blow up Clerkenwell Prison. In addition to this, he accompanied Ryan on all his most important missions, and was frequently in London, where he was able to get much light and leading from Superintendent Williamson, the great detective chief of Scotland Yard. Mallon never forgot the words of advice and wisdom he received from

Mr. Williamson, and they are a wonderful commentary upon what I shall describe later on, and what I regard as the handicap with which the detective officer is saddled through a superabundance of ornamental officialism. "The four essentials for a policeman," said the brains department of old Scotland Yard, "are truthfulness, sobriety, punctuality and tremendous care as to what you tell superiors." On the latter point he insisted that the constable had to carefully put out all he had to say in the palm of his hand, and look at it with great concern to see whether, and how many ways, it could be twisted by the superior; then put it back again and speak it with great caution.

Sir Henry Lake, again, was a tower of strength to young Mallon in his training days. From personal experience he was well acquainted with the methods of the secret services of Russia and France, and he abhorred the *agent provocateur* system, while he cordially hated the *mouchard* plan. In fact, he even disapproved of disguises, holding that a police officer with ordinary intelligence and good character ought to be a match for any ordinary conspirator; it was simply a conflict of intellects in which all the advantages were with the police, for the wrong-doer was countenanced by no one, while the officer had the support of the law and the sympathy of every right-minded man. In his opinion the best armaments for a detective were to prove himself truthful, sober and zealous.

Mallon entered upon his career with the saving grace of thoroughly appreciating the fact that he knew nothing at all of the business he was about to engage in, and that he had everything to learn, and he possessed a splendid determination, and an innate desire, to be faithful and respectful to those it was his office to serve. Added to this, he did not look like a policeman, being undrilled; he did not walk like a policeman; and having a very fair education,

combined with a great love of reading, he was able to converse upon almost any subject, which was a great advantage when he was away from Dublin and had to put up at hotels. Quite early in his connection with the force he instigated an order that he should remain unrecognized outside his office and should not receive the salute from the uniformed constables that is the due of an inspector. He thought it might embarrass him in his work. He had been working for upwards of twelve years, behind the scenes, as it were, when Mr. William O'Donnel, the chief magistrate of Dublin, espied the young officer in court and asked who he was; and on Mallon being subsequently presented to him, he expressed the greatest interest from the fact that he had heard so much of him for years, but had never been able to set eyes upon him, either in court or outside. A good story is still told in the force bearing on this matter. At the time the circumstance happened Mallon was chief of the detective division. A constable of the B division, which actually had the Castle yard within its jurisdiction, had been drawing his weekly wages for a dozen years at the police offices, and one day, pointing to Mallon, who was walking across the yard, asked the policeman at the door of the pay office who he was. "Oh!" said the fellow, "he's some clerk or other in the Board of Works!" "I thought he was some blessed thing of that sort," said the other, and passed along. Ten days afterwards he was up as a defaulter, and found the "clerk of the Board of Works" sitting on the Board of Superintendents in judgment upon him. His subsequent language and conduct towards his brother constable—in regard to the difficulties the idle tarradiddle might have led him into—are unpublishable.

Implicit obedience was Mallon's watchword, and he regarded it as part of his religion that when he had to take

the initiative he should do everything in absolute good faith. Consequently there never was a single mark against him in the police records. An idea of the strongly marked character and the stability and deep-rootedness of the sentiments that were within him may be gathered from the following incident. On taking up his quarters in Dublin, he, as a conscientious Catholic, early joined a sodality and literary club connected with the Young Men's Catholic Association. But he soon discovered that there was a tendency amongst the comrades he met in that connection to allow their general conversation to drift upon dangerous political lines. As much, therefore, from a perfect sense of loyalty to the companions he had made and was making as to his own conscience and convictions, he at once resigned his membership. And I may here record it that in after years Mallon formed the very fixed and deliberate opinion that it was, at least for a considerable time in the last century, impossible to organize any private society or association of young Irishmen, however innocent and worthy its original programme, without encountering that danger of drifting along the path of political speculation and the weighing and the calculation of national chances which only too certainly lead to the development of conspiracy, and which always attracts hot, impetuous blood when a nation's grievances are legitimate and a nation's aspirations are denied.

It has been my privilege to visit the scene of Mallon's early upbringing, and it was very edifying to hear him speak of Canon Murphy, the parish priest of Meigh, who was responsible for his spiritual guidance in his youth, as he stood before the tablet that perpetuates the pastor's memory in the little church on the hill close at hand. "I often spoke the truth in one or other of those boxes," said the stolid old policeman as he passed the couple of

confessionals, " and I well remember the last words of the canon when I left him to bustle out into the greater world. ' John,' said he, ' so far as I know, I don't think the duties of a policeman are congenial to your nature. However, all I will say to you is this: If ever you are called upon to do things that are not right, don't do them; and if you leave the service, leave the knowledge you have gained, meanwhile, behind you.' "

The base of the canon's admonition has been the policeman's rule of life, fortified by the firm conviction, as he says, that our criminal code is the best in the world, and that religion teaches us to obey the law as we find it, and endeavour to alter those things that would be improved in the alteration by constitutional means.

I may say, also, that Mallon has often assured me that a very powerful element contributing to his success as a superintendent was the deep impression made upon him by the conduct of the police during the Amnesty riots of 1872, in the Phœnix Park. He is satisfied that the Government were not fully informed, or they would have acted differently. Mr. P. J. Smyth and Mr. A. M. Sullivan were undoubtedly clever agitators, but they were not violent; they had no need of violence in any case. Mallon was merely a spectator of what took place, and he is satisfied that some of the uniformed officers who were actually in charge of the police were the worse for liquor, and they did not act with proper discretion. " It was a splendid exhibition of ' how not to do it,' " affirms Mallon. " It greatly impressed me and had much to do with building up my efficiency in after life."

CHAPTER III

SIDE-LIGHTS ON THE FENIAN MOVEMENT

MUCH has been written from time to time about the Fenian rising beginning in the early sixties, and I have no intention or desire to go over the old ground. There are a few points, however, that I am able to clear up, in the minds of any of the "old brigade" who are still alive, and for the general information of younger persons who have made themselves familiar with the romantic, but in many respects extravagant, schemes of the "Irish Republican Brotherhood." For instance, it is a fact that Pierce Nagle began informing as to the existence of the Fenian conspiracy and its ramifications as soon as he had been "sworn in" a member, and he would probably have gone on for longer than he did had the police absolved him from going into the witness-chair. He was a plausible scoundrel, who ingratiated himself with the Stephens-cum-O'Donovan-Rossa crowd by posing as a martyr to the cause. He had been a National School teacher, and was dismissed by his chief, a Catholic priest, on account of his violent political views, and when he drifted into Dublin, he had sneaked his way into the position of sacristan at St. Laurence O'Toole's church. As a folder in the printing works of the *Irish People* he occupied his spare time in prowling about the editorial department, when the backs of the staff were turned, or they were away at lunch or

tea, and absorbing as much of the private correspondence as he could lay his eyes upon.

There were a great many of the old Fenians of that time who believed that Stephens was betrayed after he escaped arrest at the raid of the newspaper and lay hidden in a house called "Fairfield," at Sandymount, but it was not so. His apprehension came about through an old man going to the police and relating that three or four men, whom he had occasionally seen about the steps of the *Irish People* office before the raid, were in the habit of arriving at Sandymount station and crossing the line there to a lonely house that was close handy. It was then that Mr. Daniel Ryan put a detective officer named Rothery into a policeman's uniform bearing "30 E" on the collar, and set him to obtain a description of the occupants of "Fairfield." The inspiration of putting this man in a constable's coat was a concession to the flatulent, high-falutin', bombastic conceit of James Stephens, who, it was known, would never for an instant allow himself to believe that the authorities would look after a person of his personally-estimated importance with anything less elaborate than the entire paraphernalia of the whole British Secret Service. Rothery got behind some bushes in the garden of "Fairfield" to secure a few furtive whiffs at a "dudeen," and at once won the sympathy, and assistance as a scout, of the gardener—a person of that class always willing to lend a hand when restrictive discipline is in the cart. Rothery got a very good description of the tenant, who was known as "Mr. Herbert," had plenty of money, and seemed pretty generous with it, and a "G" division man, named Dawson, who knew Stephens, identified the Head Centre from it. It is very doubtful if the person who first drew Ryan's attention to "Fairfield" got the reward of one hundred pounds that was offered for

information of Stephens' whereabouts, but he was well looked after by the police authorities, and his position in his line of life was considerably enhanced.

The escape of Stephens from Richmond Bridewell, where he was detained pending the magisterial inquiry into the charges against him, was directly due to the parsimony of the British Government, who frequently distinguish themselves by some fantastic performance or another when there are serious dealings with Ireland or Irishmen to be carried out. This particular lock-up was under the authority of the Dublin Corporation which was, of course, dominated with Nationalist proclivities, and its custodians were known to be corruptible in the Fenian cause. Accordingly the "Castle" strengthened the guard with extra police and sought to charge the expense of them to the Corporation. The Corporation, just as promptly, started to kick and flatly refused to pay. The only way out of that difficulty was plainly obvious to the super-intelligence of the imperial authorities—it was *to withdraw the extra precautions* for the safe custody of the alleged conspirators. The balance of the story is equally simple. One of the Nationalist warders, named Breslan, made some wax impressions of the prison keys; Michael Lambert, a mathematical instrument maker, employed by Howard Grubb and Co., of Rathmines, prepared duplicates, and, assisted by information provided by another warder named Byrne, who had been in the Metropolitan Police, and whose brother was clerk in the Chief Superintendent's office, as to the movements of the police, the abandonment of his temporary habitation was quite an easy matter for the head conspirator. The man who planned the whole of this business was Colonel Thomas Kelly, who had been a signal officer in General Thomas' army during the American Civil War, and whose subsequent release from the prison van in

Manchester led to the death of Sergeant Brett and the execution of the "Manchester Martyrs."

When he scaled the wall of the Bridewell, Stephens dropped into the arms of Kelly, who took him first of all to No. 33, Haytesbury Street, and from there to rooms over the tailor's shop of Christopher Downey at 19, Kildare Street. An intimate friend of Mallon's, who was also a tailor, and made clothes for him and several other members of the detective force, was at Downey's house and was introduced to Stephens, and he subsequently got an awful shock when he heard the newsboys shouting out the reward of one thousand pounds that was offered for Stephens' arrest. He was alarmed lest the Fenian should be taken and he accused of betraying him, owing to his intimacy with the police. Stephens remained in hiding for a couple of months before he left Dublin, but the police were not very diligently looking for him, as all the experienced men were busily occupied at the Commission before which the other Fenians were being tried. The escape was eventually engineered by a man named John Flood, a native of Sutton, near Howth, and popularly known as "Smuggler" Flood. He arranged with a man called Captain Weldon, who owned two coal smacks, and who died quite recently at Clontarf. One of the smacks was drawn up at Most Street, on the South City Quay, and Stephens and "Smuggler" Flood, dressed as ordinary bargemen, worked at the windlass as the boat proceeded down the river. Stephens went first to Newcastle and then made his way to France, and finally left Havre for America. Mallon discovered these details years afterwards in the course of conversation with Flood and Weldon.

The escape of Stephens was his undoing so far as the Fenian organization was concerned, for his compatriots thought the same means that had been employed to

free him might have been used to the benefit of the others just as easily, if Stephens had not been a mass of selfishness. He never had much weight with them afterwards, and the more he blew himself out with "I'll take the field in 1866," and "This year I will be with you in the field," the more certain they became that he was nothing but an untrustworthy gas-bag. The needy old lady and her daughter in whose apartments he lived, and Downey, who was on the verge of bankruptcy at the time, never breathed the name of Stephens to the police, notwithstanding the substantial character of the reward; and even stranger still, neither Flood nor Weldon were ever known to boast of the part they took in securing the safety of the conspirator.

Mallon told me a curious story about Michael Lambert, the mechanic who made the duplicate keys. He fled to Paris, and about two years afterwards Father Norton, S.J., of Gardiner Street, called on Mallon and told him he had recently met Lambert in the French capital. "What do you know about him, John?" said the cleric. "All about him," answered Mallon. "Ah! you ruffian!" exclaimed the priest. "In any case, may he come home again?" Mallon said he might. His reverence then explained that he had a heavy cope and Lambert had promised to make him a strong, substantial clasp for it, and, amongst others, that was one reason he wanted him back. Thereupon Mallon produced a uniform belt he had with a silver buckle, which he cut off and gave to the priest to have gilt and turned into a cope-clasp. That clasp is probably still in use at Gardiner Street or some other Dublin chapel. Lambert, relieved of the necessity to make a clasp, made and presented to Father Norton a set of six silver spoons, with "I. H. S." on the handles, and, curiously enough, these got stolen, and it fell to Mallon's lot to recover them

in a pawn-office on "the Coombe," and restore them to the clergyman.

Lambert's homecoming was winked at by the police, and this for several reasons. It is true that some of the witnesses had left Dublin and others had died, but not the least potent of the considerations that weighed was the knowledge that Lambert had received nothing for the keys—that he had been actuated purely by what he believed to be a patriotic duty to the Fenians; and that although he had known all along where Stephens was in hiding, and that he (Lambert) had fallen upon some very rough times in Paris, he had never blabbed.

As to the débâcle of the Fenian movement in 1868, I do not think I need trouble here. The infamous John Joseph Corrydon, one of the Revolutionary officers, who was confidentially in the pay of the Government, under circumstances I have set out elsewhere, "gave the game away" as far as Godfrey Massey was concerned. The special mission of the latter was to pull up the railway at Limerick Junction so as to cut communication between Dublin and Cork and enable the cable office at Valentia to be seized and the proclamation of an Irish Republic despatched to America. Massey was a fine fellow and a brave man, who had nothing of the informer's instinct about him. He was probably the best of the lot of the particular brood with whom he was dealing, but he was disheartened when his own schemes tumbled to pieces. He smelt treachery; he believed that most, if not all, of his *confrères* were steeped in duplicity and that it was through their cowardice, if not their actual machinations, that he found himself in the position he then was, and he made a clean breast of it.

It does not appear to me, at this distance of time, to be of any very material importance how Massey actually made

his confession; but as Sir Robert Anderson gives a very picturesque account of his participation in the affair, in "Side Lights on the Home Rule Movement," I take leave to give it *in extenso*. This is what Sir Robert says:—

> "This task led to my being asked to undertake another, of a much more delicate and difficult kind, namely, to secure one of the more important prisoners as 'Queen's evidence' at the approaching trials. It was rather a strain upon professional etiquette, but a barrister may discharge any duty sanctioned by the leader of the Bar, and it was for the Attorney-General I was acting. Armed with plenary powers, I visited the gaol. It did not take long to discover that Godfrey Massey was incomparably the ablest and best informed of the prisoners. And I found, moreover, that his indignation was deep at the deceit and cowardice of Stephens, Kelly, and the other American leaders. I then took the governor of the prison into my confidence, and asked him to smuggle me into Massey's cell, and to get me out again unobserved. It was possible, he said, only if I consented to go in during the warders' dinner-hour, and to remain until after locking-up time.
>
> "This was an ordeal at best, and not without risk, for Massey was a powerful man, of a passionate temper, and in no amiable frame of mind just then. But I faced it, and after half a dozen hours in his cell, I left Kilmainham Gaol in possession of the whole story of the 'Insurrection plot.'"

I have Mallon's written assurance that that statement is not correct, and that Sir Robert was not the man who did that thing, and as I can scent inaccuracy in other statements and claims contained in "Side Lights on the Home

Rule Movement," and as the book is redolent of prejudice from cover to cover, I elect to believe Mallon.

One of the least-known plots of the Fenians of Stephens' time was what was known amongst the Brotherhood as the " Plan for taking Dublin by Barricades." It was devised by one Alfred Aylward, and was to have been put into execution on the occasion of a hay market. The scheme was to take all the cart-loads of hay, saturate them with petroleum, and set fire to them in such positions that " the Castle " would be cut off from the military barracks. In fact, Dublin Castle was to be completely isolated and then captured by the insurgents. Aylward was a Jesuit pupil at Kilkenny, but on leaving there he went to Italy, joined Garibaldi, and fought against the Pope. Returning to Dublin, he became managing clerk in the office of Mr. George Bolton, the Crown Solicitor. He was in the habit of masquerading in Mr. Bolton's office in Fenian get-up, and when Mallon arrested him on the Crown Solicitor's premises, he found the " Plan for taking Dublin by Barricades " worked out in great detail in his pocket. I am under the impression that the Government did not take him seriously, or some special influences were brought to bear. In any case, he was released, and he subsequently went through England under the name of " Rivers." After the Phœnix Park murders a letter appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*, professing to give a detailed account of what had happened in the Park on that fatal day of May. Of course, it was published anonymously, and Mallon, by direction of Lord Spencer, asked Mr. Gallaher, the editor of the *Freeman*, for the MS. He at once identified it as being in Alfred Aylward's handwriting. The letter was nothing like being wholly true, but some of the statements it contained were correct, and Mallon came to the conclusion it was evident that Aylward, who was

proved to be in Dublin at the time, knew something about the affair. This man went out to South Africa and aided the Boers at Majuba Hill, and eventually came home in the same Government ship that brought back Lord Chelmsford. The police kept an eye upon him for a very considerable time and he eventually died in Sweden about a dozen years ago.

CHAPTER IV

"CONSPIRACY," AND "INFORMER"

THERE are two great causes that militate against the maintenance of law and order in Ireland at such times as the always warm blood of her sons is excited by plausible agitation, whether political or social.

These are loathing for an "informer" and a passion for "conspiracy," coupled with a low sense of appreciation, on the part of the masses, as to the exact inwardness of either term.

This is all the more remarkable in a country that is mainly Catholic and where the teaching of the popular religion is bitterly opposed to secrecy. To such a degree does the former sentiment exist—and especially when the country is most stirred by the conviction of injustice—that the best interests of the whole community are frequently sacrificed rather than the opprobrium attaching to even a false accusation of "informing" should be risked.

There is nothing to be said against the detestation in which the true informer, the Corrydon-cum-Talbot-cum-Carey variety, is held. Harvey Duffism, immortalized by Boucicault in the *Shaugraun*, is taboo over the whole civilized world—as much so indeed as we in England hold to be reprehensible the *mouchard* system in France and the employment of the *agent-provocateur* in Russia. But there is a wide difference between the acceptance

of "blood-money" and the betrayal of one's political associates, who in many instances have been led astray quite as much by the traitor's enthusiasm as by their own inclinations, and the securing of a runaway area sneak-thief, or advising a shopkeeper when one has witnessed the theft of a pair of boots from the hook on a door-post. It is these little niceties that are not fully appreciated by the people of Ireland when the motto is "agin' the Government" and the flag of "another injustice" is floating at right angles from the pole. The trouble is want of discrimination at these seasons. Proportion is ignored. The man who enters the witness-box—or mounts the table and installs himself in the witness-chair, to be precise in dealing with Ireland and its manners and customs—in a criminal case, is inevitably dubbed an "informer" and the odium legitimately attaching to the worst class of offenders in this respect often alights on the essentially good citizen and remains there for the rest of his life. Nay, it frequently descends to his children. I knew a family of notable Irishmen, any one of whom was well entitled to hold his head high in whatever company the word "patriotism" was mentioned, who for years were disliked and distrusted by a certain large section of their fellow-countrymen because a man of nearly the same surname had given evidence against O'Donovan Rossa and the Phœnix boys in the early part of 1859. He was not related in any way and his name was only approximately similar to those of the distinguished and admirable Irishman I allude to. Yet this unreasoning and purblind prejudice took root for a time. As a rule the cry of "Informer" and "Harvey Duff" is first raised, and yelled the loudest, by those very men whose honesty of purpose and loyalty to their fellows is the least substantial. The unthinking and the naturally mischievous echo it; the timid fall into line to avoid attracting attention.

Eventually the whole specious and lamentable tragedy of defaming innocence and righteousness—and good citizenship generally—receives the acquiescence of the spineless majority who do not believe a word of it and who know that it is the keenest weapon at the disposal of the interested ruffian. Thus are the efforts of the executive and the police to maintain order and the law frustrated. And for like reasons the anger of the "strong arm" is aroused and the machinery of legitimate authority is stretched, often to the point of unconstitutional acts, the packing of juries and vindictive sentences. As a rule the false accusation of "informer" is launched by the most detestable of the political criminals as a certain means of propagating intimidation, and it is just as certain that the bitter enmity that often exists between the police and the people is directly traceable to this cause. The difficulty of obtaining evidence, even from eye-witnesses, and in the most elementary cases of disorder or misdemeanour, at times when the country is in a state of political ferment, and the indiscriminate application of the offensive expression "Harvey Duff" to the ordinary constable engaged in the absolutely essential duty of preserving the peace of the community and protecting private rights and property, produce an amount of exasperation that invariably leads to disastrous conflicts.

It is not sufficiently recognized in Ireland that the maintenance of law and order is not exclusively the interest of the British Government, however alien that authority may be regarded by considerable sections of the people. It seems difficult to explain why greater efforts are not made by those responsible for the education and enlightenment of the masses to explain and bring home to them the truism that no possible form of Government, howsoever "National" or democratic it be, that does not depend upon

respect for individual safety and communal interests can possibly survive. As showing that the principle strikes out pretty generally and in all directions and applies to all sections, I may mention that even Mr. Parnell, at the zenith of his fame and fortune as a leader, discussed with a representative of authority the advisability of his having police protection against a particular class of his own countrymen, and that the revolver found in the possession of Mr. Michael Davitt when his ticket-of-leave was estreated had actually been loaned to him by the police, who had unearthed the suspicion of a plot for his assassination at the hands of his erstwhile *confrères* of the Fenian movement. The police had notified Davitt of the fact and had strongly urged him to carry firearms for his personal protection.

Speaking from the experience of many years, I declare my conviction that the great body of the Irish police—Irishmen, mark you, and in many cases the very cream of the manhood and good character of the peasantry—earnestly desire that the misunderstandings existing between them and their fellow-countrymen should be cleared away, and that the relations, one to the other, should once for all be established upon a basis of reason and an enlightened appreciation of the simple duty of the one and the absolute necessities of the other. The Catholic Bishops at the Synod of Thurles, in 1854, strongly condemned all secret societies, and Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, subsequently declared that "Hell was not hot enough or eternity long enough to punish the Fenians for their disobedience to the ordinances of the Church." The subtle distinction between the guilt of membership in a secret society and the act of becoming a silent accessory after the fact of crime and outrage, or supporting intimidation by attaching popular odium to acts of good citizenship, is difficult of

realization, and whilst there is a chance that a Rescript ordering the rendering "unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" might bring about a revolution for Justice, the responsibility for neglecting the effort would appear to be a heavy one. Mallon once said to me, in discussing these matters, "God help them if they succeeded in driving Irishmen out of the police service, and the Dublin force and the Constabulary throughout the country had, of necessity, to be recruited from the Highlands of Scotland, the mines of Wales, and the pastures of Devon and Cornwall and the Ridings. Indeed, the leopard would then have to change his spots or the species would rapidly undergo such a process of decimation as to present a vision of ultimate annihilation."

It is far from my thoughts to excuse, or extenuate, in ever so slight a degree, scoundrels of the James Carey class. It is the business of the police in Ireland to make use of such persons when occasion arises and when the objective cannot be fully attained by any less distasteful means, but I know this, that there is no class in Ireland to whom that breed is more obnoxious than to the honest, disciplined Irish police constable. My point is that it is infamous to apply the word "informer," which is suitable, thoroughly descriptive, and entirely applicable to the James Carey variety of criminal, to the man or woman who bears testimony to having seen an atrocious murder committed, or whom accident has placed in the position of being able to give evidence against the perpetrators of some wanton and cruel outrage against God and man—against society and the public weal.

There is a large section of Irishmen to whom "conspiracy" is the breath of their nostrils, and yet, as I have said, there is no accurate appreciation of the true inwardness of the word. In the present state of society in

Ireland it is actually impossible for any number of young fellows of a particular class to gather together with any frequency, and irrespective of the original purpose of their meeting, without their drifting into conspiracy of some sort or other and of greater or lesser degree. If the meetings take place immediately after chapel on Sunday mornings and start with general criticism of the religious instruction that has just been delivered, thirty minutes is more than the average length of time that elapses before politics are introduced with the inevitable pronouncement by someone of something that "might be done." The third "social" of a literary association will not have passed away before the germ of conspiracy has been quickened, and even if the occasion is the assembly of some religious sodality the effect is the same. All that is requisite is one adventurous spirit—and it is next to impossible to find more than two Irishmen, of the class I have in mind, gathered together without such an one. More often than not that one spirit possessed of initiation becomes the first and best friend of the police so soon as his vapourings begin to bear fruit and carry him beyond anything he had ever contemplated in his first efforts of mere braggadocio. If the young men of Ireland knew as much about Irish conspiracies as John Mallon knows, or even as much as I know, they would leave conspiring with their fellow-countrymen very severely alone. The essence of conspiracy is loyalty to one's fellow-conspirators, and this is never to be found in the Hibernian variety.

Take the case of Pierce Nagle. This man was a teacher in one of the National Schools out west, and he was dismissed by his employer, a Catholic parish priest, on account of the undesirable extremeness of his political views. Accordingly he drifted into Dublin, joined the Fenian

Brotherhood and became a folder in the office of the *Irish People*, a paper founded by James Stephens, O'Donovan Rossa and others, to advance the cause of Fenianism. Another appointment he managed to obtain was that of sacristan at St. Lawrence O'Toole's Church in Dublin. The *Irish People* was founded in November, 1863, and Nagle evidently did not lose much time in deciding upon which side his bread was likely to be best buttered, for in January, 1864, he wrote to Sir Thomas Larcom, the permanent Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and predecessor of Mr. Thomas Burke, calling his attention to the existence of the Fenian conspiracy and entering into considerable details as to its ramifications. Larcom referred the letter to "Dan" Ryan, superintendent of the "G," or Detective Division, of the Dublin police, and to John Mallon was assigned the duty of interviewing Nagle. From that time until the *Irish People* was seized and suppressed in September, 1865—upwards of eighteen months—Mallon had weekly meetings with Pierce Nagle, and it may be well imagined, therefore, that there were not many coming and going to and from the office of the paper that escaped the attention of the authorities. Indeed, there was very little going on inside the Fenian headquarters except what remained within the inner consciousness of Stephens, Rossa, Kickham, O'Leary, Luby and the others, that was not as an open book to John Mallon. Pierce Nagle never contemplated having to testify in the witness-chair. Indeed, I have very strong reasons for believing that he had been promised that he should not be called upon to thus lay bare his duplicity and that he was eventually the victim of something savouring very much of faith-breaking. However, the exigencies of the public service prevailed, and he suddenly found himself in the limelight, decorated with

all the most glaring paraphernalia of the worst type of informer.

The police went through the farce of arresting Pierce Nagle with the rest of those responsible for the production of the *Irish People*. It is doubtful if any of the police who effected the arrests, except Mallon, had any knowledge of Nagle, although the contempt in which the Irish police usually hold a real informer was at one time thought to have borne the responsibility of an injury Nagle sustained during the seizure. Certain it is that he was somewhat truculent when the law "had a grip on him," and he received a non-compromising clout on the side of his head with a baton that was certainly most useful in the interests of verisimilitude. The fact that, after all, he had to mount the witness-table rendered the contemplation of the utter futility of the police dissembling their love extremely bitter to Nagle, and the feeling was added to by the contemplation of the very effective way they did it.

A useful illustration of the kind of creature Nagle was is contained in the following incident. Mr. A. M. Sullivan called a meeting for the twenty-second of February, 1864, at the Rotunda, in Dublin, to protest against the erection of a statue of the Prince Consort in Dublin, and in favour of substituting one of Henry Grattan. The Fenians decided to break up that meeting, and they succeeded. One of the leaders of the attacking party was Pierce Nagle, and the purpose of the *Irish People* having been effected, his tall gaunt figure was seen on the front of the captured platform frantically waving a lump of green baize he had stripped off the reporters' table, as the only available substitute for a green flag. A few hours after the fracas Inspector Entwhistle, of the uniformed police, was discussing the happenings with Mallon. "Did you see that big, wild-looking fellow with the large eyes who waved a green flag from

the platform ? " asked Entwhistle. " Indeed, and I did," replied Mallon ; " and, by gob ! I was just after taking a long statement from the ruffian in the Park ! "

The case of James Carey, and the circumstances under which he became an informer, I have described at considerable length elsewhere in this volume, and I have also dealt in some measure with the probable influences that operated with Delaney. Corrydon, the informer, who won notoriety during the Fenian rising of 1867-8, was a person of an altogether different type and, from a moral standpoint, was probably the inferior of all the others. It is an undoubted fact that he commenced to betray, and went on betraying, his associates out of a sense of *gratitude to the police.* He was known to be a sworn member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood—as the Fenians called themselves—but he first came under the special notice of the police and was arrested under very disreputable circumstances. He begged very hard to be let off, and not only promised disclosures, but actually gave the police some very valuable information. In view of his possible usefulness in the capacity of Queen's evidence, and with almost equal regard to the unsavoury nature of the charge against the ruffian and the public scandal his prosecution was certain to create, the police allowed him to go, on condition that he cleared out of Ireland. Accordingly, he went over to Liverpool, and there—probably through the deliberate design of the " G " Division of Dublin police—he got into touch with a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary (who was specially located at the great transatlantic shipping port watching the movements of known Fenians and suspected Irishmen), to whom he regularly and unreservedly informed.

It was through the instrumentality of Corrydon that the contemplated raid on Chester Castle was frustrated and

the arrest of Godfrey Massey was effected. Godfrey Massey subsequently became a traitor to the cause in which he was sworn, but in his case, again, he was actuated by motives entirely dissimilar to those which moved any other informer I have knowledge of. Massey had come over from America with funds for the Fenians, and he had found things in a pretty chaotic condition in that organization. He was already considerably disgusted with the vapouring and bombast, coupled with absolute inactivity and absence of initiative that had characterized Stephens, and he had not much hope of success when he went down to Limerick Junction with the object of cutting the railway there and preventing communication between Dublin and Cork, and so securing control of the Atlantic cable at Valencia, over which it was intended to issue a proclamation of Irish National Independence. The promptitude with which he was arrested, however, on reaching Limerick Junction, by Mr. Brownrigge, deputy-inspector-general of Royal Irish Constabulary, upset him altogether.

I have heard men like John Mallon, who should know, speak of Godfrey Massey as a really brave fellow, and express the belief that the 1867 movement would have been formidable indeed had all the Fenian leaders possessed similar courage and energy, but his capture without a blow having been struck seemed to him to confirm all the worst of his previous suspicions—that Stephens was a blatherem-skite, that the others were mainly pot-hunters by whom he had been grossly deceived, and in a mixed spirit of contempt and revenge he readily consented to give information.

There is still another class of "informer" exemplified in the strange personality of "Major Henri Le Caron," who, we are told by Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.,

"joined the Fenians in order to thwart their projects—to serve as a military spy in the interests of his native country!" Nor do these types I have mentioned by any means exhaust the list. Amongst the almost innumerable informers and spies John Mallon had at his beck and call were those who were false for the sake of mere devilry; others were traitors from fear of personal consequences, and there were not a few who were actuated by motives that were inscrutable to some of the keenest intellects associated with the police force. Perhaps this latter doubt can be fairly well summed up, however, by reference to a strange, mystic utterance once addressed to me by Mallon. It was about the time of the arrest of the Phœnix Park murderers, and I had made the, to me at the time, astounding discovery that one of Mallon's chief sources of information was a man who had actually served a long term of imprisonment in connection with the Fenian rising. Knowing the man, and the nature of his offence, I expressed intense surprise that the old Fenian's apparent patriotism, which had presumably become intensified by long years of durance vile, had not kept him from close communion with the police. Mallon replied, with a far-off expression in his eyes that might have meant either unusual sagacity or exceeding sorrow, or something betwixt the two, "A good deal of that kind of patriotism can be bought for a five-pound note in this poor country."

For my part, I venture to say that the exhilaration and excitement of conspiracy applies equally, in the case of the average conspirator, to conspiring with the police to "give away" one's associates. This class of Irishman has an innate love of mystery and muttering, a consuming desire for the self-glorification there is in persuading himself that he knows more than anyone else on at least one topic, and an insatiable craving that that glorification

should have the respectful admiration of at least one other person. It has often occurred to me that if it were possible for an Irishman of this peculiar kidney to conspire with himself and he became sufficiently enthusiastic to seriously confer with himself, he would not be safe once he was satisfied as to the magnitude of his proposition. His unquenchable thirst for notoriety and his love of enforcing his views, especially in the form of quiet-corner whisperings and mumbling into absorbent ears, would be too much for him and would inevitably lead to his ultimate betrayal.

CHAPTER V

NIPPED IN THE BUD

WHEREVER and whenever his duty to the public service warranted such a course, Mallon delighted to nip a conspiracy in the bud. He was ever keen to preserve the life and liberty, so to speak, of the would-be felon—for which the criminally inclined not infrequently displayed appreciation. His first consideration, however, was to spare innocent persons and families the bitterness and pain of personal injury and bereavement.

In many respects John Mallon was exceptional in his methods. He conceived that, in its proper sense, the word "policeman" represented a quantity distinct and apart from that embraced in the term "detective." He insisted with some earnestness that the primary object in the inauguration of the police force, in the British Isles, at any rate, was the *prevention* of crime; that the mere discovery of the criminal, after the damage had been effected, was altogether a subsidiary and minor detail. He was wont to contend for the strength and soundness of the adage which recognizes the inconsequent irresponsibility of locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. Wedded to his view as to the aims and intentions of Sir Robert Peel, Mallon stood almost alone amongst his contemporaries in the possession of a substantial record for preventing outrage and social convulsion by timely warning—in

contradistinction to the laying of traps, with all their attendant risks, for intending criminals.

The policy may be open to question, but there is no doubt that Mallon adopted it. More especially did he put the particular theory into practice when his own life was at issue—when the proposed sheath for the murderer's blade was his own body. At one time Mallon's life was almost as earnestly sought after by the "Invincibles," and one or two kindred societies which failed to attain an equal amount of notoriety, as that of Mr. W. E. Forster. It is equally beyond dispute that his line of action was successful. Many and valuable were the lives saved to the country and to the State by his timely intervention, when the meretricious ambition of a weaker detective to catch a gang of assassins red-handed might have involved, if only by the merest accident, an initial and irreparable calamity. Were further testimony necessary to establish the unmistakable success of his strategy, it would be found in the facility with which he was able, through its means, to replenish his invaluable stock of informers. In this respect, indeed, it is likely there never was a British policeman who had command of so many "sources of information." It was just because he used his knowledge to save the evilly inclined from wrong-doing, while at the same time bringing it forcibly home to them that there was already a traitor within the ranks of those with whom they were plotting, that he secured the respect and the obedience—almost the admiration—of so many who were already steeped in crime, and others who had arrived at the brink of villainy.

An incident which occurred in regard to a prominent "Invincible" goes far to illustrate the effectiveness of Mallon's methods—further, perhaps, than could be produced by limitless description. It was a peculiarity of his that he rarely sat down in his private office. As a rule, he worked

at a high stand-up desk. There was an elongated spider-legged stool available, but he seldom used it. He wrote standing up, and he interviewed his staff, and all who had business with him at the headquarters of the Irish Criminal Investigation Department, with his back to his desk and the points of both elbows resting upon it. Mallon was in that attitude on one morning in the summer of 1882—a number of weeks after the Park tragedy—when Inspector Simmons entered the sanctum in response to a distinctive ring of the office bell. Simmons was one of Mallon's most trusted lieutenants: a man of great determination, abundant resource and a colossal belief in the infallibility of the designs of his superior.

"Ah! There you are, Simmons," said Mallon, in a matter-of-fact, unemotional undertone; "you know Daniel Delaney? Works as a stonemason's labourer, or something of that sort."

"Yes, sir," replied the lieutenant.

"Tell him I want to see him here this afternoon, Simmons. Eh! that's all," and the chief turned his face to the desk and started writing.

Simmons hesitated a moment. He certainly ought to know the full meaning of the command he had just received. John Mallon prided himself upon being explicit in his business directions, no matter how brief they were. But Simmons had not quite grasped "the hang" of the order—if it were an order. His decision came rapidly—he would risk a rebuke for his seeming density.

"If he doesn't want to come, sir, shall I bring him?" he blurted out as he suddenly stopped with the handle of the door in his hand. The answer was characteristic of John Mallon.

"Bring him? Oh, yes! Delaney you mean, Simmons"—as though he had almost forgotten all about the object

with which he had recently rung the bell and had subsequently given his lieutenant a commission to execute.

"Well—no; perhaps you had better not *arrest* him. I don't want you to bother about getting a warrant. Don't let there be too much fuss, in any case. It's a purely personal matter, and I want to carry it through as quietly as possible. Tell him I want to see him and ask him to come along here. I think he'll come, but—well! *I want to see him this afternoon*—and, Simmons, make it four o'clock this afternoon."

The emphasis was plain enough. There was no longer room for doubt. The intelligent assistant had no need for further parley.

The extent to which Delaney was free to exercise a discretionary power does not appear to have arisen. Possibly there was something out of the ordinary in the persuasive tone in which Simmons conveyed the message that Mallon was "anxious to see him." In any case, although the mason's labourer grumbled a little, his mutterings were neither loud nor fearsome, however deep they may have been. He elected to keep the appointment.

Punctually at four o'clock Mallon was interrupted by the entrance of Simmons, accompanied by Delaney.

"Daniel Delaney is here, sir," announced Simmons.

"Sit down, Delaney. That will do, Simmons—you may go," murmured the chief, without turning his head or even raising his eyes from the paper upon which he was writing, and which lay before him on the high desk. It was almost as though he were muttering to himself.

Simmons withdrew after motioning Delaney to a seat.

Delaney tried to perch himself on the extreme edge of one corner of the chair. He twiddled a shabby soft felt hat between his fingers and thumbs as though trying to find an

extremity to its endless brim. He sat upon the specially selected half-inch of chair corner he had chosen, so gingerly and so lightly as to suggest there was, for him, something awfully sacred appertaining to it. The manner in which he half twisted his head off to catch furtive glances of the spot left no question of the careful and particular choice, and his hat ran so rapidly through his hands that it appeared as though he attached supreme importance to the discovery of the non-existent terminal—aye, as though the successful negotiation of the task he had set himself were the guarantee of his safety in the immediate future that lay before him.

Daniel Delaney was a small, wizened, forbidding-visaged individual. He had dirty carroty hair, and deep-set ferrety grey eyes, and a startled, frightened expression. The general appearance of fear was quite natural to him, but somehow it failed to entirely obliterate the suggestiveness of consummate villainy that was writ large all over him. Had he appeared in London about that time the average Bow Street "plain-clothes" man would have instantly recognized him as a "sneak thief," and he would have been "shadowed" for weeks in the full certainty that sooner or later so obvious a criminal must "fall." In Ireland the type, of which Delaney was a rare specimen, conveys much more. There is unscrupulousness, wickedness, actual savagery and cowardice bubbling out of each well-defined character mark. He is of the kind that can be hired. He will stab in the back for a handful of silver, or blunderbuss from behind a stone wall with a satisfaction which is almost gleeful—if the victim is of any superior class and the coast is clear to safety. Who ever saw the late Shiel Barry as "Harvey Duff" witnessed in mimic representation a human specimen of which Delaney was a prototype. Boucicault might have had the shifting, shuffling, cowardly assassin

who waited on Mallon that Wednesday afternoon in 1882, in his mind's eye when he drew his most detestable character in the *Shaughraun.*

Delaney had plenty of time to grow hot and cold and then get hot again, and ample opportunity to "pull himself together," and speculate upon the possible objects of the interview. He might have even prepared some heroic speech of defiance or impudence, should occasion warrant it, before the chief of police gave the smallest further indication that he was aware of his presence. Actors say that the longest ten minutes are those of a "stage wait." Here, indeed, was a "stage wait" of ten minutes—in the vast theatre of life—with a real tragedy in process of development.

"Well, Daniel! how are you and how are you getting on these times?" suddenly asked Mallon in a genial and almost friendly tone. He had thrown down his pen, blotted his letter and turned to his visitor, with his elbows lightly resting on the desk behind him.

"Quite well, thank ye's, Mr. Mallon, and, sure, I'm working very hard for an honest living," said Delaney, with a marked and peculiar stress on the word "honest." He probably did not intend it, but the accentuation got there all the same in his anxiety to impress the policeman. And yet, upon reflection, it is hardly a proper description to say that Delaney "said" anything. In reality, he "whined" each syllable he wanted to convey. His voice was invariably pitched in an impossibly high key, and he adopted a tone of supplication and apology, as though he thought it due from him that he should ask pardon for encumbering the earth. This strange form of affectation is known, in some parts of Ireland, as the assumption of "God help us" humility, and it is invariably associated with insincerity.

"And how's your poor old mother, Dan, and the girls,

Mary and Biddy—well and happy, I hope ? " came next, and spoken in the same cheery interested manner.

" Ah ! sure, they're well enough, Mr. Mallon, sur ; but it wasn't to ask after the health of the likes of them that you sent for me, Mr. Mallon, sur," squeaked the cringing mass of human corruption as he went on wriggling and squirming as though spiked on the extreme limit of the chair corner. And he vainly struggled to get away—to rid himself—from the pair of eyes that were penetrating his very soul ; which appeared to his guilty conscience like two terrific midsummer suns that dazzled and shrivelled him with the intensity of their searching, scorching rays.

" Indeed, Dan, I am as interested in your welfare as I am sure you are anxious for mine, and I thought you would be glad of an occasion to ask me how I am—as I am of the opportunity of observing for myself that you are in the enjoyment of robust health, Daniel."

But Delaney failed to evince the slightest appreciation of the compliment. On the contrary, he twisted and turned more nervously than ever, and his hat spun round with increased velocity. He murmured something that sounded like, " It's the ruination of me if I'm seen coming up to Exchange Court. Sure, I'd never be able to hold up me head agen, if *they* thought I was in with the pōlus."

" Well ! well ! don't mind, Dan ; I'll not keep you long," said Mallon reassuringly. " But tell me, Daniel, you know my habits pretty well ?—now don't you ? "

" How in the name of goodness would I be knowing anything at all about ye's, Mr. Mallon, sur ? Sure I know nothing of ye's habits or ye's ways or ye's doings—or ye's comings or goings either, for that matter," protested the shivering lump of misery, beginning to realize that something portentous was coming at last.

" You see that clock, Delaney," continued the chief in

his quietest, measured tones, without raising his voice the smallest degree, or exhibiting the slightest trace of emotion or concern. "We regulate it by the Town Hall clock, so if you haven't the opportunity of seeing our timekeeper you can always judge our estimate of the hour without troubling to come up the court."

"Yes, sur, thank 'ee, sur," whimpered Delaney.

"Well, Dan, I want you to listen very attentively to what I am going to say, so that there shall be no mistake about it. On Friday next—that will be the day after to-morrow—I shall leave my office here at exactly six by that clock."

"Sure, what do I be wanting to know that for, sur?"

"Don't interrupt, Daniel. I shall walk down the court, cross the road, and proceed slowly through Parliament Street. I say slowly, because, as you know, I never hurry. Hurrying sets up palpitation, Dan, which isn't good for a weak heart. Then I shall turn to the left and go down the Quay and cross over the river by the Eden Bridge. Going along the riverside of the North Quay, I shall get to the Park gates at about twenty minutes past the hour. That will enable me to reach the Gough Monument as near as possible at twenty-three minutes past six. Then, if all goes well, I intend taking the road which goes round by the Zoological Gardens, and so on to the North Circular Road and to the house where I live. You know where I live, Dan, don't you?"

"How should I know where you live, sur? But what in the name of God has it all got to do with me, sur? What have I done that you should be talking to me like this?" cried the thoroughly affrighted ruffian, as he rose from the corner of the chair, now so completely uncomfortable that he could no longer affect to retain the seat.

"This," answered Mallon, as, advancing towards him, he

placed a hand on either shoulder and held him so that he *must* look him full in the face. "This," he repeated very slowly, but with great determination: "*Don't you be within two miles of the Gough Monument at twenty-three minutes past six on next Friday night, as you value your soul*—you understand me? Get out of my office." He swung the trembling ruffian round and conducted him through the door.

Simmons and others, who were in attendance in the room beyond, found it difficult to believe that they did not hear Mallon's voice raised during the last part of that conversation with Daniel Delaney, although such a thing was so novel as to be altogether inconceivable. But nothing could persuade them that they did not actually witness considerable agitation of their superior's right foot when Delaney came through that door.

The immediate result of that interview was the indefinite postponement of the intended "execution" of John Mallon, near the Gough Monument, shortly after six o'clock on the following Friday evening.

It had fallen to the lot of Delaney as a member of the Assassination Society, known amongst themselves as the "Invincibles," to plunge a knife into the back of John Mallon on the ensuing Friday. Whether that specific item of "history making" had come to the share of Delaney as the result of "a draw," whether by "selection," or whether he had bombastically volunteered for the work, does not very much matter. Suffice it, the plot was there and the minutest details had been arranged and perfected. Yet two full days before the appointed time Mallon was in possession of the whole murderous conspiracy, and frustrated it by sending for the scoundrel who had agreed to do him to death, and practically rehearsing the whole scheme with him.

Neither is it very material how much or how little of his interview with the chief of the police Delaney related to his brethren in blood-lust. Its effect was complete. It was indubitably brought home to the "Invincibles" that they were nursing a traitor in their bosoms. It was equally certain that they had no possible means of ascertaining the extent of the knowledge possessed by John Mallon of the accursed conspiracy to which they were committed.

Mallon carried out his programme on the Friday precisely and fully in the manner he had described his intention to Delaney. There was none to hinder him, nothing to break the monotony of his daily walk from his office to his home. So far as outward appearances went he might have been taking an appetizing constitutional after church on a midsummer Sunday. But the thoughts and calculations that coursed through his fertile brain must have been of a character to fill a veritable tome with interest.

Daniel Delaney was subsequently proved to have been one of the four men who drove away on the car from the scene of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Thomas Burke. Later, he was convicted of an attempt to murder Mr. Justice Lawson in Dawson Street, Dublin, and sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. Arraigned with his fellow "Invincibles" for the Phœnix Park murders, he succeeded in saving his neck by becoming an informer.

CHAPTER VI

THE REFUGE OF A GAOL

THE net results which attended the extraordinary interview between Mallon and Delaney at the Police office will probably never come to light. Certain it is, however, that they were many and far-reaching.

Lord Frederick Cavendish landed in Ireland carrying an olive branch. The times were out of joint in the Sister Isle—and had been so for some years. The whole country was gasping beneath a deluge of coercion. *Vox populi* was closely confined within massive stone walls. The pursuit of agriculture was almost a social crime and business was at a standstill. The nation was sullen and malicious, muttering vengefully against authority. The new Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant brought a message of peace: an effort was to be made to rule by equity where only force had prevailed. The olive branch was the "open sesame" of the gaols, and Mr. Parnell and hundreds of the trusted leaders of the people—so-called "suspects," who had been detained for months without trial—were set at liberty. For his welcome Lord Cavendish had to face a cruel and a violent death within twelve hours of his setting foot in the country—almost before the ink was dry upon his premier act of grace.

Delaney was there in the Park at the time of the new Chief Secretary's sacrifice. He was performing a kind of

Photo by] [London Stereoscopic Co.

Lord Frederick Cavendish.

[*To face p.* 51.

protection duty—seeing that no harm came to the two lads who were to wield the knives.

Within a short period of the episode in Mallon's room at Exchange Court, a man was arrested for an alleged attempt to shoot Mr. Justice Lawson in Dawson Street, Dublin. Being caught in the act—that is to say, presumably "red-handed"—he was tried, convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Within a few brief weeks of being found guilty, however, the monotony of his enforced retirement from public life was interrupted, and he emerged from his convict home to give evidence against his associates in the Park assassinations. That man was Daniel Delaney. His evidence was thought to be essential because Kavanagh "was not looking" when the work of butchery was accomplished and, as the other three did not "split," his was the only testimony as to the actual hands that struck the fatal blows.

The "attempt" upon the life of Judge Lawson was altogether a strange affair. There have existed various suspicions in the mind of the public as to the *bona-fides* of Delaney's effort on that occasion to "remove" the representative of the law who had earned the special enmity of the lawless masses by his vigorous administration of the criminal code. But the true inwardness of the episode has never been placed upon record until now.

In the case of Mr. Justice Lawson, Delaney was selected by the "Invincible" gang to play the principal *rôle* in the ghastly drama. Amongst his fellows he was always a boastful, bellicose cut-throat, ever ready with suggestions, and always urging activity in the cause of outrage—upon others. At the same time, it was remembered against him that he had never given any actual demonstration of personal prowess. True, he had stood by during the atrocities in the Phœnix Park, but he had rendered no

positive assistance in the blood-spilling. He adopted a similar attitude when Mr. Field, a special juryman, was mercilessly stabbed all over the body and left for dead upon the pavement in Frederick Street. The single occasion upon which it was agreed he was to be an actual participant in the savagery—the contemplated slaying of Mallon—had proved a dire fiasco. And the miserable *débâcle* which had attended that barren plot was associated with alarming misgivings and forebodings amongst the gang. In fact, Delaney was slowly but surely falling under grave suspicion, and the proposed attack upon Judge Lawson was to make or mar him, in the estimation of the murder club. That was exactly what constituted Delaney's dilemma. On the one hand was John Mallon, with his almost uncanny knowledge of every movement. Why, Delaney was certain that Mallon could divine even his most deeply-laid and best obscured plans. Behind the shadow of Mallon, therefore, was the assurance of a rope should he attempt the life of the judge in earnest. On the other side were his brother "Invincibles" eagerly watching his every movement for the reassurance they wanted—the completion of his mission. Delaney knew full well that if he failed them that night and remained at large, his doom, at their hands—and that within but a few hours—was as sure as the setting of the sun. The alternatives open to him were unmistakable. The hangman's slip-knot, the assassin's dagger, or arrest and prolonged imprisonment. Of the evils, the latter appealed to him as the lesser, and he deliberately chose it.

Judge Lawson, like most other Irish officials at that time, was under police protection. There were two constables in plain clothes following him. In order to come up behind his quarry, Delaney had to pass the two officers. The naturalness of that method of approach, by the way,

he reckoned, would best commend his earnestness to those of the gang who were on the look-out and prepared to cover his flight when occasion arose.

As he went forward he designedly lurched against one of the policemen. Ostentatiously he displayed the handle of a revolver from his outside breast pocket. Two steps further on and the weapon was grasped tightly in his right hand; but almost simultaneously he was seized by the wrists, disarmed and handcuffed.

Then came the trial and the sentence. Undoubtedly that piece of strategy on the part of Daniel Delaney saved his life.

Eventually, while still a prisoner, he was further suspected of participation in the Park murders and, to the amazement of John Mallon, he remained stalwart to his oath as an "Invincible" for a far longer period than many of his companions.

Delaney was essentially a low type of criminal. He was cunning to a degree, but his was the craftiness of the ape, begotten of brutish instinct. He was undoubtedly, and to a large extent, mentally deficient, and what senses he was endowed with had a distinct kink, which justified the expectation that, with the strain of isolation and close confinement and a fresh charge, involving capital punishment, hanging over him, he would break down and pant with haste to insure acceptance as a renegade. That he did not adopt that course—natural enough in the case of such an intellect—is surprising, but not altogether inexplicable. To so expert and experienced a crime student as John Mallon it indicated an awful dread of standing disclosed in his own littleness before those companions whom he had sought to impress with his boastings, and the terror of what might, and probably would, happen to him if he ever met any of them again in the world of freedom, or even should he chance to

find himself in the dock beside them, once he stood self-confessed. And there was no doubt Delaney had entertained the widest respect and reverence for the prowess of Brady, the physically strong man of the gang. It was the outcome of fear and alarm at the probable consequences of arousing the young giant to violence. But it was there all the same. It was evidenced, indeed, in many ways, but perhaps the most convincing illustration of the sentiment was contained in the almost apologetic tone in which he invariably referred to Brady when at last he found himself in the witness-chair. The existence of this deep respect was most apparent, for, whereas he spoke of "Dan Curly," "Joe Mullett," "Tim Kelly," and so on, with the most perfect effort of *bonhomie*, he never missed rolling his tongue round "Joseph Brady" in its entirety. And he produced the full Christian name with considerable unction and completeness. Indeed, his method, in this, left no question but that had the masterful one of the assassins rejoiced in the additional baptismal prefixes of "Aloysius Alphonsus," he would, with much particularity, have repeated, every time he had occasion to refer to the man, "Joseph Aloysius Alphonsus Brady." However, it was not until after Farrell, Kavanagh and Carey had been called upon to give evidence before the magistrate, and the car-driver had identified him as one of his four "fares," and at the same time had failed to distinguish those who had actually used the transfixion knives, that Delaney hastened to make a clean breast of it. Another important point that actuated him was the conviction that his testimony would, to a certainty, place the halter round the neck of the terrible "Joseph Brady." Even then he was much nearer finding a burying place amidst a couple of bushels of quicklime than he ever dreamed of, for John Mallon found it extremely difficult to forget the readiness

—if not the actual avidity—with which he undertook to play the chief part in the "removal" of the detective himself. It is almost an open secret that Delaney would never have found his foot on the steps leading to the witness-chair had he not, adopting the policy of Carey, tempted Crown Solicitor Bolton with a vague suggestion that he could disclose "metal more attractive" than that already laid bare.

It is due to John Mallon to say at once that he never had the slightest faith in any such professions, and that, although he bowed to the prejudices of the higher authorities of "the Castle," he entered an earnest protest against the acceptance of Delaney's evidence. His reasons were chiefly that he believed he could secure the conviction of those who raised the weapons without it, and that his experience taught him that the offer of a special testimony was deceptive and the outcome of desperation. If there were other influences at work within him, they were the feeling that the atmosphere of the world would be all the sweeter without the exhalations of Daniel Delaney and—well, the sentiments of Mallon were none too friendly towards the man who had, somewhat cheerfully, agreed to encompass his sudden and violent death.

That Mallon was right in his view, that the offer to implicate certain Irish Parliamentarians was altogether specious, was amply borne out a little later when Delaney was taken to London at the instance of the *Times*. It was hoped that he would be able to identify certain prominent Irish Nationalists as having been in some way connected with the black doings of 1882. On that occasion, however, the very best—and worst—he was able to do turned out to be of no material value to the "Parnell Commissioners," as they were called.

His journey across the Channel, however, was not entirely

thrown away. Although it served no useful purpose from the point of view of those who were antagonistic to Mr. Parnell and his adherents, it ought to have provided an appreciable relief to Delaney from the sameness and routine of existence in penal servitude. And it was in that respect it demonstrated that continued being is sweet, even to the convict, and that there are consciences to which the safety and protection of prison walls are preferable to some of the perils of freedom. Had Delaney possessed any further relish for the blandishments of the outer world in a sufficient degree to ignore the risks which attend the balance of life of an Irish informer, he had a golden opportunity during his holiday jaunt to England. But his sentiments and tastes would seem to have already undergone a radical change. The nervous apprehensions he endured during his stay in London were so great that he almost welcomed his return to the security of his Irish prison.

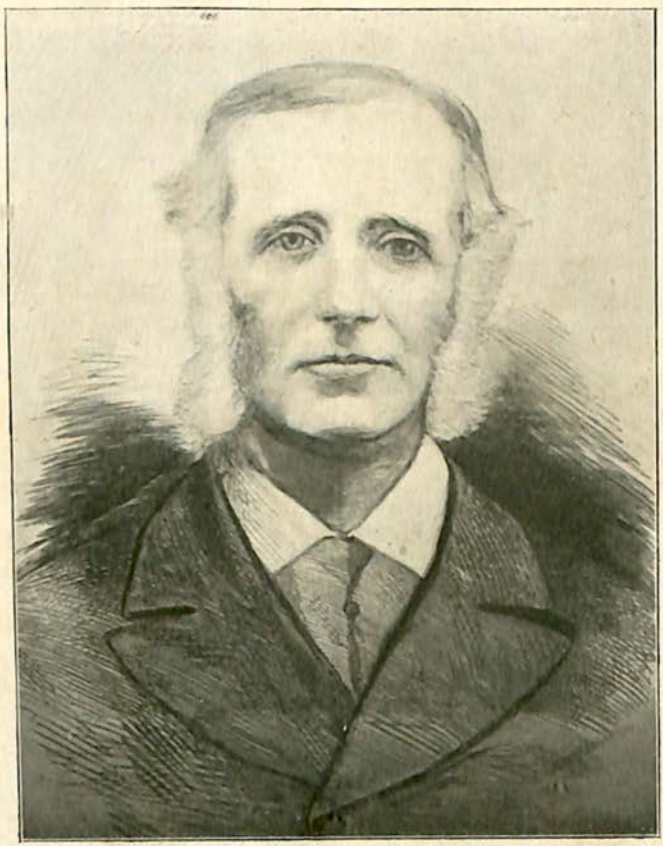
He was in the charge of a couple of Mallon's men. The curiously assorted trio were lazily sauntering along the Strand. They were in search of prominent politicians who were to be pointed out to the converted assassin. One of the officers espied a well-known journalist, who, he was aware, was fully acquainted with Delaney's appearance. It flashed through the mind of the intelligent policeman that it would not do for the pressman to recognize his prisoner. The possibilities of paragraphs—true and untrue, harmful and harmless, mainly speculative, and in every case embarrassing—arose to his mental vision with the ponderous import of Babylonian bricks. His intimate acquaintance with the knight of the pencil made it inevitable that he should stop and speak. Even though he tried to dissemble, he was sure the ubiquitous and pushful scribe would claim an acknowledgment.

He would probably develop a great and keen inquisitiveness if he detected the slightest effort to avoid him. Such things come as second nature to him who is dependent upon "space" in the daily Press. The only hope, therefore, was diplomacy, with frank acceptance of the risk which invariably attends it. Quick as thought, he extracted a shilling from his pocket and slipped the coin into the hand of the convict in mufti. "Get across the road—quick! Buy yourself a drink at that pub. over there, and don't dare to move until I come. Scoot! Quick!"

Here, indeed, was a splendid opportunity for flight, with substantial chances of avoiding recapture. Delaney was working out a sentence of twenty years' penal servitude. Here he was absolutely untrammelled. A long-time convict, suddenly freed in a strange cosmopolitan city where probably not more than half a dozen people had ever seen him before. He was comfortably dressed in the garb of a middle-class citizen. He had a whole shilling in his pocket. What incredible chances! The instinct of almost any man, under such circumstances, would be to put as much distance as possible between himself and his erstwhile custodians. But Delaney saw the situation through far different spectacles. In the half-hour he was free from restraint he weighed up the *pros* and *cons* of the opportunity, and one of his bitterest reflections was that when first convicted he would have had no difficulty in finding scores of his fellow-countrymen, within as many minutes, to lavish sympathy upon him and give him shelter. How different were the conditions now! There he was nervously—aye, and anxiously—watching for the early appearance of *his friends*, the police. His dread was that an "accident" might happen to him at the hands of those very countrymen he would

have so confidently appealed to a few months earlier. He had done evil for what he wanted them to believe was his sense of duty to the land of his birth. His ambition had been to pose (in secret, it is true) as a monument of reckless savagery in speeding the salvation of his nationality. And there he was, by his own acts of abhorrent duplicity, forced to select a return to the gnawing hunger and grinding drudgery of gaol life, rather than risk the danger underlying the discovery of his identity by a single soul hailing from his native shores.

There was a good deal of irony in the situation, and Delaney's reflections were intermingled with much gall. He elected to wait for the police. At the end of half an hour, which they had spent over refreshments and small-talk with their journalistic acquaintance, Mallon's men found their charge thoroughly weary of his own company. There he sat, still anxiously watching for them with bleary eyes fixed upon the door of the Strand hostelry —and with considerably less than a shilling in his possession.



MR. THOMAS HENRY BURKE.

[*To face p.* 59.

CHAPTER VII

INEXORABLE FATE

HOW came it that so momentous a national calamity as the murders of the Chief and the Under Secretaries for Ireland succeeded in slipping past Mallon into the realms of accomplished fact?

The question very naturally arises in view of the wonderful completeness and ramifications of his organization for acquiring information of the designs of Irish extremists. Underlying it is, indeed, another and a strange episode of the side-lights by which the tragedy was surrounded.

It was the exigencies of time that beat the policeman. It was that alone which was responsible for casting the black shadow over the land, for putting back reconciliation another decade, and throwing half the great families of the Empire into mourning.

As a rule, this class of Irish murder scheme was well and carefully thought out. They took days and sometimes weeks to mature. Very little, indeed, was left to chance. In some cases, where the habits of the prospective victim were pretty regular, the details were actually rehearsed up to the *dénouement*. Satisfaction was thereby obtained that there was nothing likely to hinder the completion of the villainy. Should anything have leaked out and the conspirators find themselves in the meshes of the police, nothing would be found upon them. Many a time

a marked man was stalked for days and his every movement noted before the fatal hour was definitely decided upon. True, Mr. Tom Burke had been under sentence of death on numerous occasions that had proved abortive. But the initial decision had always been come to days and even weeks before the actual date fixed for the carrying-out of the unholy purpose. The method of procedure had been carefully discussed in detail, and the arrangements completed so far as possible, to prevent reprisals. The determination to effect the horror of the 6th of May—to kill Mr. Burke in the Park on that very day—was only arrived at, and the place and approximate time decided upon, a few hours previously. To be exact, the resolution was come to in a public house in Dame Street, where Carey and Brady, and some of the others, were waiting to witness the procession escorting the new Chief Secretary to the Castle to take the oath which should bind him to the proper fulfilment of the arduous and difficult duties he had undertaken—duties which many a more seasoned politician would have been excused for shrinking from.

That particular plot to assassinate Mr. Burke was, as a fact, barely a couple of hours old when Mallon received a secret message from one of his army of informers. The man asked for an appointment in the quietude and seclusion of a certain trysting place behind the Viceregal Lodge. Had John Mallon but foreseen, or even suspected, the magnitude of the issues involved and the enormous consequences depending upon the *rendezvous*, the whole future history of Ireland would have been remodelled. The smashing of political party ties and the *débâcle* of Liberalism would have been avoided.

Mallon started from his office that evening rather earlier than it was usual for him to retire to his home, with a view

of granting the interview that had been asked. He proceeded slowly along the quays and entered the Park gates almost as the neighbouring clocks were chiming the quarter to six. Near the Gough Monument he was saluted by one of the constables of the G Division of police. That is the detective section of the force, and its officers are, of course, in plain clothes. Mallon was somewhat surprised by a slight exhibition of agitation on the part of his assistant, and the hurried question he put to him as to which direction he intended to pursue in order to make the North Circular Road—where he lived.

" Why, I was thinking of strolling round by the Lodge," said the chief.

There was nothing out of the way in the suggestion. It was a beautiful May evening. There was a cricket match being fought out on one of the velvety stretches of green a little higher up in the Park. In the distance some of the keen spirits of the garrison were energetically contesting a polo game. Each had its full complement of interested and occasionally demonstrative spectators. A band was there where the soldiers had gathered together. The faint strains of the music discoursed, as they mingled with muffled outbursts of approbation and encouragement won by the sportsmen, added soothing charms, by their evidence of animation, to the general sense of perfect peace and happiness pervading the glorious acres. The prowess of the riders and the batsmen absorbed the attention of nearly all the casual visitors to the Park. The main roads were deserted save for a few idlers dotted here and there, at uncertain intervals. Three or four stragglers were to be seen about half a mile beyond where Mallon was standing, and as near as may be opposite the full front of the Viceroy's residence. Further on again, a car stood by the side of the road. The pony in its shafts was browsing

on the sweet turf which edged the footpath. Its driver sat upon the "dickey," apparently waiting for a party which had temporarily forsaken the pleasures of the drive for the thrilling contemplation of the polo.

All the world knows now that amongst those very stragglers were Brady and Kelly, with two keen-edged, well-tempered, murderous blades concealed about them. Carey was about also. He was hiding in the shadow of a clump of budding chestnut trees, waiting to give the signal which was to be the death-warrant of Mr. Burke. Likely enough he was wondering how he could best compose himself when he joined the polo watchers—for he did mingle with that crowd so soon as he had waved his handkerchief and was convinced of the effective reply to it.

"Don't go home that way, sir," pleaded the man to Mallon. "There are some of the 'boys' in the Park this evening, and I don't know what they may be up to."

"*Whom* have you seen?" asked Mallon. He had not failed to notice the unusual display of anxiety in the manner of his subordinate.

"Well, there is James Carey, sir, and Brady, and that little man Delaney, and two or three others. They came in some while ago and went over towards the polo ground, and I have not seen them since. Maybe they are quiet and harmless enough and mean no mischief, but I'd like you not to go that way by yourself, Mr. Mallon," urged the officer.

"Very well," acquiesced the chief, more out of respect for the man's earnestness than from any fear for his own safety—and with a certain amount of secret satisfaction at finding an excuse for changing his route for the nearest road home, as he was wearing new boots that were pinching him. Under such circumstances it is easy to argue

one's self into the belief that brief delay will not prove material.

John Mallon, reflecting that the news his informer was bringing him would keep for a day, or even two for that matter, turned off sharp to the right, by the soldier's statue, and took the road which skirts the Zoological Gardens. Besides, he assured himself he could easily run against the sender of the message later on that night, should he subsequently conclude there might be urgency in the matter. He had not taken many steps in his altered course when the plain-clothes constable came running after him.

" Beg pardon, sir, but have you a gun with you ? " he asked in as casual a tone as he was able to assume.

" No ! But why do you ask ? What's the matter with you ? "

" Take mine, Mr. Mallon, will you ? Do take it, sir—please ! I don't know why, but I shall feel so much more comfortable if you will. Or will you let me come with you ? " said the faithful fellow, without further effort to hide his genuine alarm.

He, as everyone else connected with the administration of justice in Ireland, knew that John Mallon carried his life in his hands, and there was not a tree or a shrub in the Park, or a wall in the lanes, behind which there might not lurk a " history maker," possessed of a foot of steel, or an ounce of lead, for Mallon.

Mallon considered very rapidly. It was another of his great characteristics that he was able to concentrate his mind in a moment and come to a conclusion in less time than many would take to draw a dozen breaths. He realized that, after all, the message that had reached him earlier in the day might be part of a deep-laid scheme for trapping him to his own undoing.

" Have you another one for yourself ? " he said, and on

the man's assurance that he had, he added: "Show it me."

Satisfied in that respect, he took the proffered weapon; looked to see it was fully loaded; put it at the half-cock, and proceeded on his way. To every outward appearance the least excited person in the Park that evening was John Mallon.

Arriving at his home, Mallon's first thought was for his aching feet, and he removed the causes of the trouble. Then he sat, lost in meditation—chewing the cud he had gathered from his man in the Park. How long his ruminations lasted he could never say. He was at last recalled to the realities of mundane affairs by the sound of some one scampering along the roadway, as though for dear life. He hastened to the window and was just in time to see the man he should have met behind the Lodge flying past. He was hatless, and there was the stare of terror in his eyes of one pursued by a thousand devils.

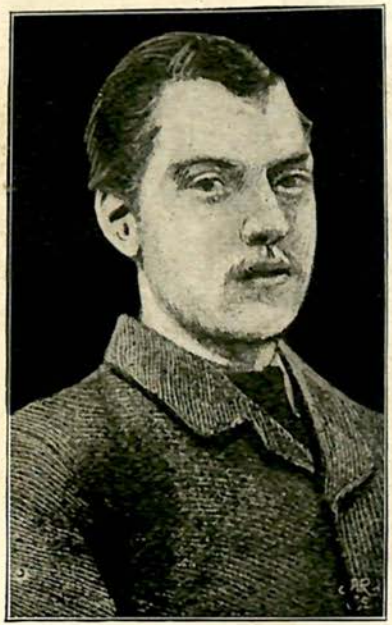
Alarm seemed epidemic that evening. Even Mallon had now arrived at that stage when all the premonitory symptoms of great trouble were upon him. The difficulty of theorizing as to what was happening, or had actually taken place, was overwhelming. The material in his possession was all so very meagre. Mallon was racked as he had rarely been before.

He was not long in doubt. Before many minutes had passed he was being furiously driven on an "outside car" back to the Park. His unlaced boots covered unsocked feet, for he had not delayed even to properly clothe himself. His officer from the Gough statue had brought him terrible tidings. Mr. Burke had been stricken to the heart, and there was "another gentleman" lying hard by, literally hacked to pieces.

Mallon was first to recognize in the butchered remains of

JOSEPH BRADY.

The principal assassin in the Phœnix Park Tragedy.



TIMOTHY KELLY.

The youth who was tried three times for using one of the knives in the Phœnix Park Tragedy.

[*To face p.* 65.

Mr. Burke's companion in death the new Chief Secretary, who had been "sworn in" that very morning in his presence, and had signalized his assumption of authority by immediately handing the superintendent of detectives a warrant for the release of Mr. Parnell and hundreds of other "suspects."

As he stood gazing upon the bloody work of the desperadoes the heart of the great policeman was torn to tatters with the anguish of the thought that he had allowed himself to be persuaded against continuing his walk through the Park. True, he could have proved but a poor match for those cruel transfixion knives, unarmed as he would have been. More than probable, it would have been his life's blood that lay there glistening in the rays of the setting sun. Likely enough the positions would have been reversed. Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish might have been contemplating the lacerated corpse of John Mallon, and wondering what could be born of womankind so fiendish and so wanton as to conceive such wickedness.

Those who know Mallon best fail to banish the belief that had he continued unheeding on his way, the mere sight of him would have turned the purpose of the villains. They were not there watching for him. They were not expecting him, and they had received many a taste of his resources. Might they not have concluded that the game was up—the plot exploded; that Mallon was in possession of their plans, and that, to a certainty, they were invested by his forces? Or again, had they sought concealment for the moment while he passed, and still have clung to their hellish purpose, might he not yet have been in time to frustrate them or to have intercepted their victims, had he kept the appointment behind the Lord Lieutenant's palace? It is beyond the range of conjecture that the mission of the "Invincibles" in the Park that

day was the momentous disclosure Mallon's informer was burning with anxiety to disclose. But it was not to be. The All-Seeing willed it otherwise, and history was made. A revolting, ghastly page of it was recorded.

Nor did the chapter conclude with the death-sighs in the Park. The man in waiting behind the Lodge—the informer who sent the message to Mallon; he who ran breathless and hatless beneath Mallon's window as though perdition were at his heels—was one Kenny.

Likely enough the treachery of Kenny to the murder association was discovered subsequently. Not so very long after the happenings I have related, he was decoyed from his home one night and cut, slashed and hacked to pieces and riddled with lead under a railway arch which spans Saville Place in Dublin.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NOBILITY OF THE REALLY NOBLE

THERE are peculiar superstitions inherent in the Irish race, says Mallon. In many of the worst of Ireland's criminals they develop to a finer degree than in any other section of her community.

For example, the acceptance of "blood-money," and the swearing away of a life, is abhorrent—although the salvation of one's own neck marks a distinct variation in the sentiment. On the other hand, the mere flouting of an oath, involving only the temporary disappearance of a comrade, comes to be regarded as part of the game by the class of criminal I allude to when he finds his way into an Irish conspiracy. The most sacred pledges are entered into and fortified with awful invocations, and the semblance of frankness is assumed with all the greater impressiveness because these people rely upon the soundness of "mental reservation." Consequently, in nearly all nefarious plots, with the exception of a few unreasoning enthusiasts and a smattering of pitiable innocents, every man involved suspects every other one. More often than not he is justified in doing so. In any case, the custom of the wary is to make all convenient arrangements to put themselves on the right side of the fence in the event of certain contingencies arising. Amongst these people there is nothing conceivable that is more unlucky than to be held personally responsible when wrong-doing is laid

bare. Hence it comes that in a huge preponderance of Irish plots there are vastly more men bursting to repose a confidence than there are prepared to draw a trigger. From the very initiation of these "Invincible" clubs—or whatever high-falutin title is agreed upon—there are always those anxious to join for the purpose of making profit by scotching the developments—even at the expense of their companions' liberty—who would honestly shrink from giving testimony against a man's life.

It is not so very long ago that a delicious romance of a projected dynamite outrage came within my knowledge. There were engaged in it eight or nine choice spirits, of what Mr. Gladstone described as the *mauvais sujet* variety. They had prepared an elaborate business with spectacular effects. The infernal machines were duly arranged and secreted, and although there was considerable difficulty in finding anyone willing to risk depositing the explosives, it was eventually got over by the discovery of a first-class simpleton.

But nothing came of it. The police started making arrests and did not finish until they had nabbed all but "the innocent," whose apprehension was to have been the chief item of the original play. Strangely enough the prisoners were not detained very long and were not brought to trial. As each of these precious "conspirators" was arrested, he lost no time in sending for his own special detective, to whom he had been giving information throughout, and from whom he was expecting reward when "the innocent" victim was bagged with the miniature mines in his possession. It is a fact that each and every one of them was an informer and had his bright particular police officer, of the lower and lesser experienced ranks, be it said, thirsting to become the repository of the very earliest news concerning the impending "atrocity." The whole

scheme failed, indeed, through what the conspirators regarded as the reprehensible duplicity of " the innocent."

For these reasons among others equally substantial, it must not be taken for granted that because the man Kenny, who was murdered in Saville Place, was prepared to tell Mallon all about the design upon the life of Mr. Burke, it necessarily follows that it was he who disclosed the names of the slayers *after* the event. It may readily be imagined that Kenny drew the line at denouncing the murderers, however ready he may have been to secretly indicate the nature of the plot. Be that as it may, the truth will never be known, for the name of the person who gave him the first clue of the assassins, *after* the blood was spilt, is a secret which Mallon intends shall pass away with him—if the disclosure of it depends wholly upon him.

No hard-working public official's lot is a bed of roses when there are conflicting elements in the State engaged in a deadly feud, and, in these circumstances, the condition of a successful policeman is less enviable than most others. Amongst the principal discomforts of the latter are bitter jealousies on the part of the untrained, unknowledgeable, red-tape authorities who rank as the superiors of the practical man relying solely upon wide experience. Curiosity is generally the stumbling-block, but sometimes the cause of the interference is a consuming desire to appear great and assert the authority of position. The hypothesis acted upon in such cases is that the only person with the slightest knowledge of the subject matter and possessing the ability to carry the business through to a successful issue requires " advice " from his titular chief. The breath of the nostrils of the really great policeman is secrecy, and consequently there is more friction and more heart-burning in the detective forces of the Empire over the thirst for particulars which afflicts the ornamental heads of

departments than through any other cause connected with the calling.*

Even the indispensable John Mallon was not spared pin-pricks in this respect. No sooner had the heat and burden of the day passed over, and the anxious times of 1882–3 sunk into the deep gone-by, than a high-placed member of the Irish Executive "directed" Mallon to prepare a book of reference to the questionable personalities he was acquainted with. It was a somewhat extensive order, seeing it was intimated he would be expected to furnish a list of all the informers he was in touch with, and had had dealings with, during his experience as a police officer. He was also to thoroughly describe and catalogue every criminal who, to his knowledge, was then in the country—with special reference to those who had not been very, very bad, but might be vaguely expected to grow worse. Moreover, there was a suggestion that, to make the work thorough and complete, it would be well to amplify it with a list of all the persons he had any suspicion of—however remotely.

Mallon firmly believed in keeping his own counsel and relying upon the discretion which he knew he could trust —his own. Such a compilation as was asked for would no doubt make it easy, in the future, for the mere clerical staff of the Castle to conduct criminal investigations without troubling individuality or experience, but the names and histories of persons—some of whom were invaluable sources of information—might get into the hands of those who would not appreciate the importance of observing the confidences they involved.

Mallon would have none of it. A few hours' reflection,

* Early in his career, as Superintendent, Mallon caused the system under which he had to "report" to be altered, because he discovered that some of his most momentous and secret information became the subject of after-dinner familiar confidences at the Kildare Street Club.

and his reply was delivered that the magnitude and importance of his labours were already such that he had no available time for the writing and the preparation of books. In other words, his answer amounted to the same thing as the "*Non possumus*" returned by Pio Nono to an earnest application by the Irish people, and which a Nationalist historian described as "the ecclesiastical Latin for 'I'll see you damned first.'"

The matter was not allowed to end there, however. The apostle of the hide-bound traditions of discipline in the public service sent for the chief of the detective police and declared it was essential he should know who it was who had given material information as to the perpetration of the Park outrage.

There was a plain issue. Mallon recognized that the position of the policeman must be clearly defined there and then, or never at all. He claimed to shield himself behind the uncompromising formula of the force, "from information received," and positively declined to deliver up the name of his informant.

"You know the alternative, Mr. Mallon?" asked his tormentor.

"My resignation—possibly with the forfeiture of my pension. Very well; you can have that, but not the name of the man to whom I have given my word," answered the detective.

"Whatever happens, I must have that man's name."

"That man's act is between himself and his God and me, and I will not betray him," said Mallon.

"But you will admit you have a duty?"

"Yes; I own a duty to the Queen, and, as representing her, to her Viceroy. I will explain myself to Earl Spencer and to no one else. The responsibility for any further disclosure must rest upon him."

The official affirmed that his point was to gather the information for public purposes and he cared not whence it came.

Mallon proceeded at once to the Viceregal Lodge and sought an audience with the Lord Lieutenant.

Whatever may be said as to the maximum or the minimum of the popularity enjoyed by Earl Spencer during his term of office in Ireland, he certainly secured the ineffaceable respect of one ardent Irishman at that interview. Mallon explained his dilemma and repeated the *ipsissima verba* of his conversation that morning at the Castle.

"That man's identity should remain between himself, his God and me, my lord, but I have been reminded of my duty to my sovereign, and I obey," he repeated, with considerable emotion. "The man who gave me the first information as to the actual perpetrators of the Park murders, sir, was——"

"Stop! Stop! Mallon," hastened Lord Spencer, as he advanced towards him and placed his hand upon the shoulder of the policeman. "Did you promise him you would never disclose his name?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Did you give him your word of honour you would never betray his confidence?"

"Indeed I did, sir; I as good as pledged him my oath I would not."

"Then let it remain where it is, Mallon. Take his identity to the grave with you. *I* do not want to know it," slowly and impressively declared the Red Earl; and he added: "If there is any further question put to you on the subject, you have my authority for declining to answer, and you may refer the matter to me."

Since when, the name of the first secret informer who

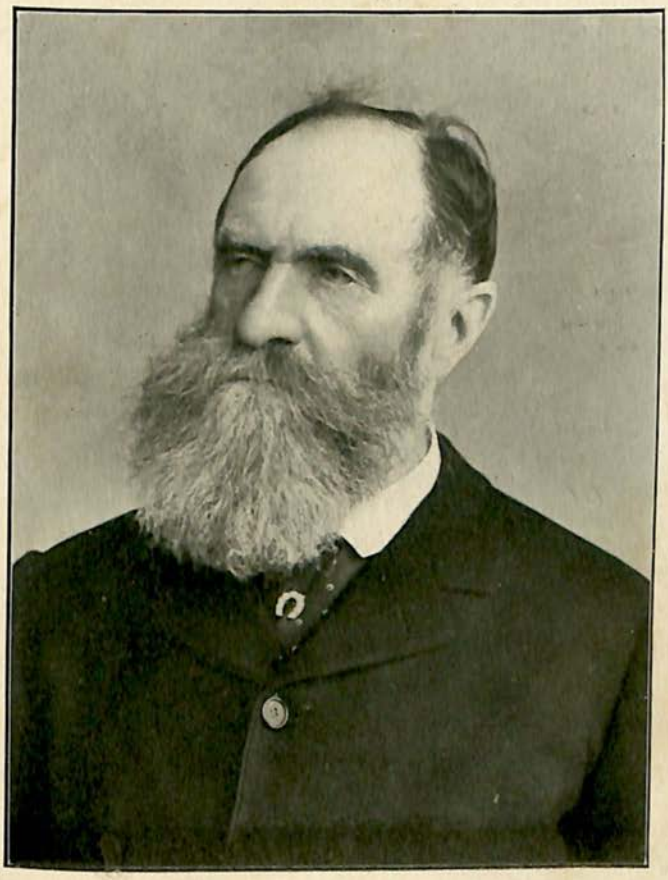


Photo by] [J. RUSSELL AND SONS.

EARL SPENCER.

[*To face p. 72.*

assisted in the work of bringing the score and odd of murderers to justice has never been spoken by John Mallon—at least, in connection with the part he played in that particular phase of the Phœnix Park tragedy.

And John Mallon once again strolled through the Park meditating deeply.

This time his thoughts were neither harassing nor unpleasant. His ruminations were upon the compensations for pin-pricks. The conclusion he came to was that irritations produced by small officialdom were more than adequately relieved by the opportunities his position afforded of contemplating the greatness of the truly great —the nobility of the really noble.

CHAPTER IX

A FATAL ERROR

THE initial resolution to form the Land League was passed at a private meeting held at the Imperial Hotel, on October 10th, 1879. Not one solid half-hour had elapsed after the conclusion had been arrived at before the police and "Dublin Castle" were in full possession of all the plans and intentions and aspirations, so far as they were concrete at the moment. Think of it! There were only from a dozen to fifteen men present on that occasion—as a fact, I have the names of only eleven—and, of course, the meeting was supposed to be a pretty confidential one. Yet, so soon as it was over, one of the participants thought it necessary to put the police on the *qui vive*. I have that man's name before me as I write, together with the details of how he proceeded from Sackville Street to Exchange Court, and I am able to say that he described the contemplated league as likely to become one of the biggest organizations ever started in Ireland, and one calculated to give the police a considerable amount of trouble. The principal reason he gave for his deductions was that the organizers were for the most part conscientious Catholics—which meant they were not going to get into conflict with the priesthood as the Fenians did—and well-educated men.

I am not suggesting for one moment that there was anything, even remotely, resembling conspiracy under-

lying the preliminary meetings that led to the establishment of the most potential social agitation of modern times. I know as much about the manipulation of the Land League movement as most Englishmen, and I do not believe there ever was, at any time, even the germ of criminal conspiracy associated with its organization and development, and I know that opinion was enjoyed by the executive of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. I have a suspicion that within their hearts and inner consciousness the Viceregal Lodge and the Castle were equally certain on this point, notwithstanding their epileptic wrigglings and shufflings and constitution-smashing gyrations to establish the contrary.

"The worst possible form of executive government in the world," the late Benjamin Disraeli once called it. Perhaps he was right. In any case, they successfully fed this agitation with abortive prosecutions and arraignments, instead of acknowledging the justice of the cause—which had to follow, sooner or later, as the day the night. Moreover, by barbarous methods of coercion and jury-packings and indiscriminate bludgeoning—of a good deal of which I was a sickened spectator—they drove the less righteous of the camp-followers to extremes.

It was in the hall of the "Four Courts," during the time that the leaders of the Irish people were on trial. The noisome comedy was being enacted of endeavouring to prove the utterances of persons arraigned for their liberty from the "shorthand notes" of amateurs, who were admittedly incapable of taking anything like a verbatim note, and others who were unable to decipher the ridiculous hieroglyphics they had managed to commit to their note-books. Pat Egan, treasurer of the League, said to Mallon: "Well, John, what is to be the outcome of all this?" The non-committal policeman replied: "I don't

know." "I'll tell you," continued Egan. "You will get no verdict here. Then you will suppress the League and try to manufacture some other way of effecting the imprisonment of the leaders of the people. And then you" (meaning the police) "may look out."

The absolute truth of that prophecy is now a matter of history.

Within a very few weeks Egan was contesting the Rotunda Ward of the city for a seat in the Corporation, and Mallon, with his faithful henchman, Sheridan, sauntered aimlessly into one of the polling stations. A trivial circumstance struck him. James Mullett, the publican, was giving enthusiastic support to Patrick Egan, the bigoted teetotaler. Mallon remarked to Sheridan: "That's a very remarkable thing, that a publican would be the active agent of a teetotaler," and the lieutenant for once in a while borrowed a lesson from the wise tactics of his namesake's "Lord Burleigh," and contented himself with a profound shake of the head. There are many more astute-looking detectives who would have passed the item by as merely an amusing incongruity. Many stranger happenings decorate the pages of Irish political history, where the weakest link of a political chief often becomes his tower of strength, and where the halo of a "patriot" has often dissolved into the cap of alien servitude. But the presiding genius of Exchange Court had tutored himself in the inwardness of a trite saying from Young's "Satire," and had grappled it to his "soul with hoops of steel."

> "Think naught a trifle though it small appear;
> Small sands the mountain, moments make the year,
> And trifles life."

Mallon added "this" and "that" and subtracted the leanings of prejudice, and arrived at a conclusion in favour

of patient watchfulness. Mullett was not only a publican. He had been a prominent Fenian, and his "house" in Dorset Street numbered amongst its constant customers many of the "boys" who were prominent in the 1867 movement. In addition to this, James Mullett was known to be in "low water" at the time. As the result of his alertness, engendered in this way, Mallon was able to, and actually did, apply at the end of November and the beginning of December, 1881, for powers to arrest all the chief members of the assassination committee, who afterwards called themselves the "Invincibles." Whether or no he denounced Egan I frankly confess I do not know. I have reasons that satisfy me, at least, that he did not. In all the years I have known Mallon, and throughout the hours of conversation we have indulged in upon those topics, I never heard him say much, even supposing that he could, that seemed to incriminate Egan. Indeed, he always gave me the impression that he had a tender spot somewhere deep down in his heart for the ex-treasurer of the League. I have a suspicion that I know the reason for it. But that is a matter that will come later. Without the shadow of a doubt he denounced James Carey, Daniel Curley, James Mullett, Edward McCaffery, the two brothers Hanlon and Joe Brady, and a number of others who left the country suddenly when at last arrests began to be made, and who, seeing that some of them are dead, and, in any case, none of them have been put on trial, it is unnecessary to mention.

In the process of waiting and watching, No. 41, York Street, came under observation. Ostensibly a literary society was carried on there, and as a useful kind of make-believe a few odd newspapers were scattered about the place. Joe Brady was the secretary, and his principal occupation appeared to be to stand before the fire and

receive subscriptions from the members. Eventually private information was obtained that Brady was sub-centre to Daniel Curley in an active and "advanced" conspiracy of some sort.

It seems almost inconceivable that five months prior to the Phœnix Park murders the chief of the detective police, the officer primarily responsible for public security against secret societies of evil-doers, should have demanded the safe custody of the conspirators whose machinations culminated in the terrible national catastrophe of May 6th, 1882, and that his claim should have been denied him. Undoubtedly, the chief opposition came from Mr. Thomas Burke, the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who was himself destined to become the first victim of the murder club. The law officers of the Crown were consulted on the point, but they did not become sufficiently enthusiastic—to put no very fine point upon it—to outweigh the objections of the permanent Secretary. The conspirators were described as "mere tradesmen," and the reliability of the police "information" was doubted. Mallon was jeered at as an alarmist, and the in embryo "Invincibles" were airily wafted to the limbo of supposed nonentities as "a cowardly set of blithering pot-house politicians."

The horrors of the Phœnix Park on that black Saturday of the May following were a wondrous disillusionment for the hide-bound dreamers of dreams at Dublin Castle. Once irreparable damage had been done there was no difficulty in securing permits for the arrest of suspects. Such, indeed, was the vehemence for capture that it is remarkable one-half of the entire Nationalist population of Dublin was not secured under lock and key. "An informer must be found," was the profound dictum of the new-born hustlers. One learned and eminently practical

gentleman whose services had graciously been placed at the disposal of the Viceroy of Ireland, and who had previously held office in India, capped the situation of general panic with the suggestion that a few grains of maize should be placed beneath the tongues of those under suspicion. "For," said he, "if it comes out dry, they are lying." They had tried it in India with almost infallible success. Gilbertian as this may appear, the incident will be within the recollection of at least two gentlemen who are still alive, and who were at that time associated with the Government and can vouch for its accuracy. Nor was the author of the proposition completely satisfied when it was explained to him by another official who had some slight knowledge of the character and comportment of the average Irish conspirator that a cat might just as well try to inveigle a mouse out of a hole by purring to it. The confusion was rendered all the more complete by reason of the fact that a great number of the Castle officials had only recently been imported, and knew little or nothing about the actual business of their departments. It is pretty safe to say, therefore, that John Mallon was one of the few men who managed to keep his head. Within three days of the Park murders he had the members of the assassination committee safely packed away in Kilmainham Gaol under the Act of Parliament known as "Forster's Suspects Act"—a beneficent provision that enabled Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues to incarcerate Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and the like, at a time that the Dublin officials were refusing Mallon permission to take charge of Brady and Carey and kindred souls of that sort. That is to say, that by Tuesday night, May 9th, 1882, James Mullett, the chairman of the "Invincibles" committee, and his three colleagues, Dan Curley, James Carey and Ned McCaffery, were all under arrest. But the full significance

of these proceedings is not yet quite apparent. It must be remembered that even before the terrible tragedy of which Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish were the victims, assassination plots had been pretty plentiful. If none of them had been consummated, the fact was due largely to fortuitous accident and to the marvellous information that Mallon managed to glean, that "something" was going to happen. The warnings he had received just enabled him to frustrate that "something," from time to time, without enabling him to push his measures for public safety very much further at the moment. Very frequently the "somethings" were directed against the policeman's own life, some of which I have described elsewhere in these notes, and curious as it may seem, information of such schemes was always more readily vouchsafed him than of any other plots. From the moment the murder committee was incarcerated political crime in Dublin came to an absolute standstill, and the police enjoyed a period of comparative rest. Could there be better confirmation of Mallon's wisdom in requisitioning the detention of these men in the previous November? But if doubt on the point still existed, it was swept away beyond the possibilities of all question in the following September. In that month the Suspects Act lapsed and it was not renewed. There was no further authority for the imprisonment of Curley, Carey and Co., without formal charge being preferred against them. They were, of course, released automatically with the cessation of the power to hold them. Then at once the reign of terror was re-established. Almost every week-end—generally a Saturday evening—brought a blood-curdling sensation of some sort. On November 10th the man Kenny was done to death under the railway arch that spans Saville Place. A few days later there occurred the Abbey Street shooting affray,

which originated in a *mêlée* between opposing factions of the extremists themselves, in which the police, who were shadowing them, eventually took a hand. In the revolver fusillade that resulted a police officer was shot dead. About the same time the savage attempt was made to kill Mr. Field, the juryman, who was stabbed all over the body, and had a miraculous escape from death. This outrage was followed by the attempt to waylay Mr. Justice Lawson, for which Daniel Delaney was arrested, tried, and sent to penal servitude for a long period of years.

One staggering part of the whole of this dreadful business was that the police were aware of the identity of the moving spirits in these atrocities, and yet they could not succeed in taking them red-handed, and they could not get anyone who could, or would, identify them. The false odium attaching to what the Irish call an informer prevented many people assisting the police, and others, with the best possible intentions, utterly failed to identify the culprits when they were put up amidst a group of persons for their inspection, or when they were pointed out to them. Another amazing thing was that after the Park murders were perpetrated, Mr. Gladstone galloped a short Act through Parliament, giving the Irish Executive power to examine suspected persons on oath, which really amounted to the right to establish a Star Chamber inquiry, and yet those extraordinary facilities were allowed to lie idle and the opportunities afforded by them, good, bad, or indifferent, were persistently ignored. Mallon became humiliated and despondent. Outrage after outrage was taking place on the very threshold of his sphere of duty, and he was utterly powerless. He confessed to me that he was "ashamed and vexed," and at last he was constrained to take his

courage in both hands. He protested to Mr. Samuel Lee Anderson, the then Chief Commissioner of Police, that he had lost all hope of obtaining a witness unless the Government consented to put the Star Chamber clause of the existing Act into operation. He begged him to bring the proposition under the notice of Earl Spencer. Mr. Anderson went to the Lord Lieutenant, who at once approved. It then became a question of what magistrate should be appointed to hold the inquiry, and Mallon was consulted in the matter. The Act prescribed that it should be conducted by one of the Dublin metropolitan magistrates. There were three of them available, and this is how Mallon explained to me he arrived at the selection. Mr. Charles O'Donnell was altogether too dignified; he was better suited for the position of Lord Chief Justice on the Woolsack, and, besides, he was far too conscientious. Mr. Keys was, in his opinion, more or less of a lunatic. There only remained Mr. John Adye Curran. Give him Mr. Curran. He knew that the latter was a great personal friend of Mr. Samuel Lee Anderson, and he imagined that he knew the ways of Irish political prisoners, for he had defended some of them. In addition to all this, Curran had defended the man Keenan, who was charged with shooting a land-agent and solicitor named Cusack, and Mallon had been called as a witness for the prosecution. "In that case, he gave me such a deuce of a hammering," said Mallon, "and so successfully turned and twisted my perfectly truthful evidence, that he won my admiration and everlasting respect." Accordingly, John Adye Curran was appointed to make the investigation. There another slight hitch occurred, but it did not amount to much—Curran was far too sensible a man. The magistrate suggested that Mr. Stephen Ronan should assist him by

examining the witnesses. This did not suit the detective. "I should have to write the experience of my whole life in the force," Mallon explained to Mr. Anderson; "and even then counsel would not know who was who in the course of the examination." Off again trotted the Chief Commissioner of Police to Lord Spencer, who fortunately discovered that the Act did not provide for the employment of an assistant counsel to the magistrate, or for the payment of any such, so the apparent difficulty was easily and naturally surmounted. The Lord Lieutenant decided that the best possible course was that Curran should conduct the inquisition, and that Mallon should produce the suspected persons and examine them.

CHAPTER X

THE "STAR CHAMBER"

WHAT an enthralling volume a complete record of all that took place at that Star Chamber inquisition would furnish! Unfortunately, I am only the repository of bits and scraps of the procedure; and even then, there are many interesting items that I feel it is not my province to disclose. But it is not difficult to imagine the fierce conflicts that went on when each of the contestants fully realized that the stake was often the life of the witness. It was easy to get the suspects there. There was no difficulty in imposing the oath upon them. Getting them to admit anything, or to even say anything that was of the slightest moment, was an entirely different matter. The ordinary Irish witness has a marvellous facility for "disremembering" things—that is, in criminal cases. In this instance it became a positive faculty and was extended to its utmost limits. Nor is it likely that the magistrate and the policeman really expected the quarry to acknowledge anything or to say much. It is a question as to how far evidence so obtained was producible. It is still more uncertain that admissions wrung from persons under such trying circumstances would have carried much real weight with even the highest-minded Dublin jury. The task Mallon set himself was to induce an informer to come forward—to

DANIEL DELANEY.

Convicted of an attempt to shoot Judge Lawson, and sentenced to death for participation in the Phœnix Park Tragedy. He gave Queen's Evidence, and his sentence was commuted.

MICHAEL KAVANAGH.

The driver of the assassins' car. Became an informer.

[*To face p.* 84.

suggest by the subtlety of the questioning and the amplitude of the details at his command that he was completely advised as to the constitution and the methods and movements of the "Invincibles." It was by this means that he hoped to impress upon some one of the more highly-placed of the "Invincibles" that the game was up—that there was somebody "peaching"—that the safest course was to vomit the whole wicked business and become a Government pensioner under an assumed name, rather than risk the potentialities of the rope or prolonged imprisonment. With the assistance of a simple and seemingly innocent "Yes" or "No" here and there, moreover, he was able to piece together yet another set of circumstances that helped him to confound some later witness and more important member of the fraternity. Then again, the greatest generalship was required in marshalling the suspects. Without question, all who had guilty knowledge of the Phœnix Park murders and the other atrocities, such as the slaughter of Kenny and the hacking of Mr. Field, watched the doings of this secret inquiry with feverish interest and with nerves strung up to high tension. Every suspect that was summoned, and each coming and going, was carefully noted. There were frequent conferences, and each, so far as he was able, repeated to the others the questions that had been asked and the nature of the replies that had been advanced. The general policy, however, and the programme that was insisted upon by the leaders was that of "know nothing." The stratagem, therefore, that was required was in sandwiching the witnesses, one between certain others, so as to create alarm by the very sequence in which they were called, and to come hot upon one fellow when his most intimate associate had only just gone out by another door and they had had no time to confer. For

example, a known sub-centre would be taken and immediately afterwards the centre himself would be fetched into the room and Mallon would blurt out a positive declaration, in the form of a query. In many instances he had to hazard the statement, but frequently the shot went home and left its mark, while an atmosphere of doubt commenced to encompass the centre as to the fealty of his subordinate in the communion of guilt. Mallon had the advantage of the accumulated knowledge of years of the doings of these men. Being blessed with an extraordinarily retentive memory, he was able, in the mere asking of a question, to suggest that he must know a lot.

So the duel went on, and no poker players ever managed the power of bluff with greater dexterity. Here is an example that goes, in a small degree, to illustrate the two latter points. Brady was examined. Joe was stolid and firm as a rock in his disremembrance. "I disremember," was the burden of his lay throughout, and the measure of his virtuous indignation at being even so much as suspected was almost convincing. Not only were his protests of innocence loud and firm; but he invested them with verisimilitude by enlarging upon the loss of reputation involved in the mere suggestion of suspicion. Indeed, he vehemently demanded compensation for his loss of time. Recognizing the unadulterated comedy of the situation, for be it remembered both he and Mallon were quite satisfied in their own minds as to who had used those terrible transfixion knives in the Park, it seemed to Mr. Curran, like unto the judge in *Trial by Jury*, that that was a "reasonable proposition." He expressed his sympathy with the difficulties of the industrious young stonemason, thanked him for his considerate attention to the calls of the police, and directed that he should be duly recompensed for the two or three half-days' work he had sacrificed. On the

heels of Brady came Curley. "Tell me, Dan," said Mallon, "where were you on Whit Monday?" "I disremember," came the inevitable reply, without the slightest hesitation. "Well! I'll help you," continued the detective; "you were at Inchicore." "Ah! nonsense," returned Curley, with an obvious effort to produce a smile. "You were in a field with some of the other boys and they were dissatisfied with your behaviour, and on that occasion we were very nearly deprived of your attendance here to-day. In any case, you were eventually escorted off the field with a revolver at either side of your head." "Ah! nonsense, Mr. Mallon. Some fellow is making a fool of you." "By no possibility could that be-you, Curley, could it?" And so the wrangle went on. At the end of the examination one of Mallon's officers took the suspect into a public-house and bought him drink. "Mr. Mallon is a nice man," said Curley; "it's he that should be the magistrate, and not Curran. He knows a whole lot—he knows a d——d sight too much." Later in the day Curley and a lot of his compatriots met at Little's public-house and John Mallon was discussed. For a time his future career trembled in the balance.

Bob Farrell was known to be a member of the "Literary Society," held at 41, York Street, and for a long time he remained as closely shut up as an oyster. "Who's the secretary of the club?" asked Mallon. "Joe is the only name I ever heard him called by," was the answer. "Shall I put his other name down as Brady?" suggested Mallon. "Yes, you may as well," acquiesced the witness, "but remember it was not I that told you."

One morning Farrell went early to chapel and took Communion. Mallon had his eye on him, and as soon as Mass was over the fellow was invited to another *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Curran. He took the oath readily enough, and

then Mallon proceeded to hammer home the information he wanted confirming, and from time to time he reminded the young Catholic of the place he had just come from and the Sacrament that had rested upon his tongue. Farrell was a better Catholic than he was a conspirator; he found it very difficult to lie that morning, and the information Mallon pumped out of him formed the basis of the evidence he gave at Kilmainham Court-house when he was placed in the witness-chair as the first of the formidable array of informers. There are many people who will take grave exception to the final means resorted to with a view of obtaining the co-operation of Farrell, but, fortunately, the end justified the means, and the capitulation of this man at the precise juncture of its occurrence was barely less than providential. The arrests, when at last they came, were precipitated by force of circumstances, as I have indicated elsewhere, and the only available evidence, at the moment, of any import was that of Farrell. The urgency of the case brooked no delay, for it had been decided to "remove" Mallon, and Mr. Curran as well, and the earnestness of the determination was such that the arrest of the plotters could alone save the situation. Had not the evidence of Farrell been on hand it is quite possible that even after the desperate plunge had been taken no convictions would have followed.

Mallon knew, of course, that Michael Kavanagh, the car-driver, was "soft"—and so was Peter Carey, the brother of the infamous James Carey. For the matter of that, Peter was "talking" through a third person, whom it would not be fair for me to more closely indicate than to say that third person was closely associated with an old army pensioner, and the whole of the gossip got back to the astute policeman. Kavanagh was quite willing to tell much that he knew, and was most anxious to have

his evidence accepted by the Crown. But he wanted to do it in some way so that he would not be known as an informer. He wanted the indemnity he would acquire as Queen's evidence, without the odium of going into the witness-chair. In the expressive phrase of John Mallon: "Kavanagh wouldn't work," so he clapped him into custody, and cast around for other means of bringing him to his senses. Nor had he to wait long before he hit upon an inspiration. Having got Kavanagh and Peter Carey safely housed in Kilmainham Prison, he had them sent down to Dr. Carté, the prison doctor, for the usual medical examination. He had already taken the precaution of telling the medical officer what was in his mind. The result was that when Michael and Peter were brought down to the doctor's room he temporarily dismissed the warders and directed the two prisoners to "wait outside" for a few moments. Meanwhile Mallon had been busy completing his arrangements. There was some oak panelling in the passage outside Dr. Carté's door, and a small section of this was removed, upon the instructions of the policeman, and replaced by a sheet of perforated zinc. It had all the appearance of an ordinary scheme of ventilation. Mallon took up a position on the hidden side of the panelling and metaphorically glued his ear to the perforated zinc. What happened was exactly what he had speculated for. The two young beauties came out of the surgery and immediately planted their backs against the panelling. After a little preliminary skirmishing, in the course of which Kavanagh commented on the fact that he had heard Mallon had been "very good to the little mare" since he had been locked up, the car-driver, in a burst of confidence, said he had been thinking that the best course for him was to tell Mallon "all about it." "Yes," said Peter, "but for goodness sake don't say my brother

James was there." Michael assured him that he would not be so ungrateful to the family as to do a thing like that. "Who was on the car with you?" asked Carey. "There was Joseph Brady, Timothy Kelly, that fellow Caffery that was in the sogers, and the wee fellow that was up for the attempt to shoot Judge Lawson, and was working for your brother James when they were building the dispensary up in Peter Street," answered Kavanagh. That was enough for Mallon to be going on with. He waited to hear no more. Within a few minutes Kavanagh confided to Dr. Carté that "he thought he'd like to see John Mallon." Mallon was there on the spot to catch him while he was red-hot, and before he had time to change his mind. Then commenced another fencing match, for the carman wanted to deliver an assorted parcel, and to keep back many of what the officer knew to be the choicest plums. He was heavily handicapped, was Kavanagh, by reason of the conversation Mallon had overheard. When he persisted in denying all knowledge of where James Carey was on the evening of May the 6th of the previous year, the detective declared with great emphasis: "I *know* James Carey was there. But let that pass; how about the other vehicle—what about Skin-the-Goat's cab?" "Ah! be gob!" exclaimed Kavanagh, in great agitation, "you know as much as I do myself. I'll tell ye the whole truth." And he did. On the following Saturday he appeared in the witness-box as No. 2 of the group of informers.

As soon as Kavanagh's full confession had been reduced to writing and duly signed by him, Mallon dispatched an officer to Mountjoy Prison with instructions to have the convict Daniel Delaney brought down to him at Exchange Court. Delaney was at the time serving his sentence for the attempt to shoot Judge Lawson. He was sent down

in charge of a warder and a rather amusing incident occurred. Kavanagh at once identified him, of course, and after he was formally charged with complicity in the Park murders, Mallon decided to hold him and bring him up with the other prisoners. But the warder stormed and fumed. "How could he go back to Mountjoy without his prisoner?" Mallon suggested that he might go to some other place—he had the prisoner and he meant to stick to him. In the end the difficulty was got over by Mallon giving a *receipt* for him in some such form as: "Convict No. (so and so) has been identified with complicity in the Phœnix Park murders, and has accordingly been charged and is detained in custody by the superintendent of the 'G' Division of Dublin Metropolitan Police."

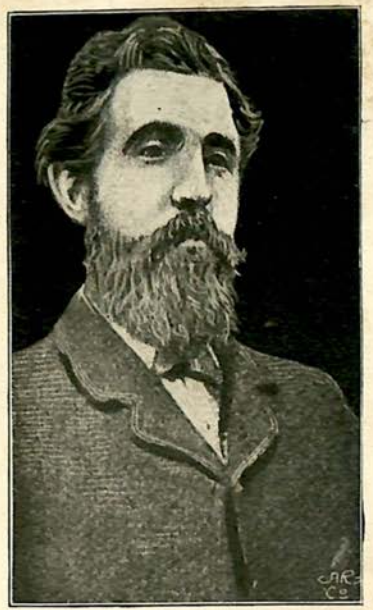
Delaney nearly died of fright that evening on the way back to the gaol, and cried and shrieked and prayed to Mallon. "I saved your life more than once, Mr. Mallon," he declared. "Good God! are you going to hang me now?" The superintendent protested that he had nothing to do with it. Whatever misfortune was before him, he had brought upon himself. It is little to be wondered at that shortly after this conversation Delaney appeared as a witness with whole volumes of his life's story and that of all his old chums. His claim to have saved Mallon's life on several occasions probably had its basis in the many resolutions he had himself arrived at to murder the policeman and which had proved abortive through some fortuitous happening that he had not counted with. Or, perhaps, the following incident explains the nicety of his reasoning. During the trials Mallon reminded him that he had seen him one morning, before the attempt on Judge Lawson, on the quay, in the neighbourhood of Guinness's Brewery. As luck would have it, he was a bit earlier than usual in going to his business that morning, and two of his little

children were walking part of his way, en route to their school. They toddled on either side of him, and the smallest held his hand. "Why didn't you shoot me that morning, Delaney?" asked Mallon. "What do you mean, Mr. Mallon?" snivelled the ruffian. "You had a loaded revolver in your pocket, and you were out there to waylay me. What stopped you?" "Ah! sure God, Mr. Mallon, I was afraid I might hurt one of the children, and I wouldn't like to have that on my conscience."

Before closing this reference to the Star Chamber inquiry, I should like to say that Mallon on several occasions impressed the following statement upon me which I now give in the words I have in my note-book taken down from his own lips. "Mr. Curran was frequently accused of using information in this investigation which he had gained while defending Fenians and other political prisoners. It is true that he was standing counsel for James Mullett, but the charge made against him is not true. He never suggested any single thing throughout the inquiry, and he never, in any way, interfered with me in my examinations."

JAMES CAREY.

Was on the Committee of the "Invincible" Assassination Society and gave the signal for the Phœnix Park murders.



DANIEL CURLEY.

Was on the Committee of the "Invincible" Assassination Society.

[*To face p.* 93.

CHAPTER XI

MAKING AN INFORMER

"AH! I was before ye's, after all, Dan."

A medium-sized man with slouching gait, shoulders rather inclined to be rounded, a thin, dissipated, red, blotchy face, prominent, beer-seasoned-nose, beady, ferrety, washed-out blue eyes, and moustache, whiskers and beard tinged with Indian red, entered the court. He had to pass below the prisoners' bar on his way to a massive table, standing in the centre of the dismal chamber, which bore a chair—the witness-chair. The dock was crowded—alas! far too crowded—with a human freight of alleged assassins. Men, boys, and homicidal irresponsibles—there were twenty-three of them penned up there accused of blood-guiltiness.

A yell of execration and despair!—which predominated it was impossible to determine. Wild and simultaneous, it came from the throats of more than a score of desperate wretches brought suddenly face to face with inexorable retribution. A loud wail of terror at the eclipse of a last ray of hope, distinct, yet inseparable from a howl of rage and hate accompanying the realization of impending, irresistible destruction; an awakening to impotence and the utter hopelessness of wreaking vengeance on the immediate contributory cause of the general doom.

One handsome-faced, bull-necked young Hercules, whose chin covering was still of the softest gold-hued down,

struck a sledge-hammer blow with his fist upon the front rail of the dock and hissed through a set of well-kept, regular, white teeth a bitter expletive. Many of his compatriots in villainy stood dazed, with bloodshot eyes almost standing out upon their cheeks, and clenched hands pressing against their temples, muttering blasphemous curses and invocations to the Virgin Mother for assistance.

Others shrank back to the furthermost limits of the cattle-pen-like structure in which they were confined, as though to hide the evidence of their abandonment, and the guilty consciences they feared stood now revealed in shameful nakedness. Some, indeed, went down upon their knees and muttered in harsh, guttural tones. Likely they were praying.

At the first breath of the execration the small man, whose entrance was the signal for the commotion, hesitated, recoiled, and would have fled in craven terror but for the official hand upon his arm. So, with an obvious effort, which plainly racked his whole nervous energies, he braced himself and mounted the table. As he took the steps he shouted, in a shrill, piping treble, casting a furtive glance, which it would be hard to describe, containing, as it did, both the elements of cowardice and exultation, to one corner of the dock, "I was before ye's, after all, Dan."

That was the scene on a memorable Saturday morning in 1883, when James Carey was led into the Kilmainham Court-house by John Mallon, the Napoleon of policemen, to give Queen's evidence against his accomplices in the Phœnix Park murders. And all the world wondered as to the true inwardness of the mystic phrase used by Carey, the infamous informer, as he took his seat on the table, bent upon saving his own neck, no matter the price in lives and liberty of his companions in one of the foulest

of crimes. Many of them, indeed, were his admiring henchmen; others were his absolute dupes.

Carey was a town councillor and a contractor, employing working men in Dublin. And he was the immediate paymaster of this particular gang of desperadoes.

It was he who left the altar rails of the little chapel on the quay with the greatest of all the Sacraments of his Church still moist upon his tongue, to give the signal which was to be the prelude of the doing to death of W. E. Forster. A lucky accident to the grey mare in the shafts of the four-wheeled cab driven by "Skin-the-Goat" saved the life of the Chief Secretary on that occasion, as a sudden change of route when Carey had his forces marshalled and skilfully disposed for an effective ambush, saved it upon another.

Carey it was who, from the seclusion of a clump of chestnut trees, waved his handkerchief in identification of Mr. Thomas Burke, on that fatal 6th of May, 1882, when the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Frederick Cavendish were so cruelly butchered with surgical transfixion knives. And here was the prime instigator of the hopeless captives at the bar, their generous paymaster, their trusted captain, the man of many fervent protestations and fierce oaths, throwing in his lot with the law, lending his weight in the balance against them.

A year ago they would have staked their all upon the fealty of Carey to the cause of "history-making"—which was the euphemism they employed to describe the terrible happenings—and to themselves; and yet here he was bending his head over the Holy Book preparatory to roping their necks. Hence the execration; hence the hastily-formed plot, in the very dock itself, for the powerful Joe Brady to clutch the renegade as he came into court,

after the next remand, drag him into the midst of the twenty-three sufferers from his falsity, and trample him to death before police or prison assistance could reach him.

It was the unfailing resource of John Mallon which prevented the substitution of that incident for the other dramatic finale of James Carey.

What had happened to establish this sudden transformation; to produce from the bloodiest of all the "Invincibles" the cringing, whining, shuffling creature of the administration of justice now sitting in the witness-chair?

He was arrested with the others, and, on being remanded by the magistrates, was conveyed, like the rest, to Kilmainham Gaol, and allotted a very special warder, who was his principal attendant during his waking hours.

Were not the main purpose in presenting this episode to confine it to irrefutable fact, a suggestion might be fairly made that the particular warder who was appointed to care for the safety and convenience of the arch-conspirator had been drawn from the "G" Division of Dublin Metropolitan Police, which was the detective division, over which John Mallon held autocratic sway. Suffice it that the man of whom Carey saw more than of any other person for many days was far more obliging and considerate than prison attendants usually are. Naturally, he conversed very little with his charge, but by the exhibition of innumerable, but indescribable, little "somethings" he succeeded in conveying to Carey's mind that if he were not actually a "history-maker," he had many sympathies in common with "advanced" Nationalism, and that, in his case at least, a patriotic Irish heart, pining for freedom, beat beneath the hated uniform of the enslaving Saxon.

These conclusions are admittedly somewhat conjectural, but the indisputable facts go a long way to justify them, for it is true that Carey got so far into the confidence of his gaoler, or *vice versâ*, that the latter consented to surreptitiously convey a note from his prisoner to Mrs. Carey. And even if there had still remained lingering suspicions in the mind of Carey as to the man's absolute *bona fides*, they were dissipated when the fellow brought him back an answer from his wife which bore ample evidence of being untampered with and unviséd by the prison authorities.

A little later on the monotony of the daily routine of prison life, as it is imposed upon a suspect under remand, is broken by a strange and startling incident.

One day, " between the lights," before the sun has completely set and a tiny while prior to the actual necessity for artificial illumination, there is the heavy tread of several pairs of feet and the clanging and the jingling of keys along the corridor on to which Carey's cell opens. It is late for the governor to make a round of the gaol, and although the doctor or the priest may be on his way to visit a sufferer or a penitent, either of them would be accompanied by a single warder only.

Yet here is the tramping of at least three persons. Obviously something unusual is happening.

James Carey instinctively moves to the door of his solitary den. Nor is it merely idle curiosity that prompts him. These are terrible times, when every unusual incident is pregnant with meaning to the guilty conscience; when even the unexpected sight of one's own shadow has momentary terror in it. The great campaign of " history-making " has miserably fizzled out. Ambition of the glory attaching to the stealthy " removal " of political opponents and the law-givers has surrendered to a craving for

self-effacement and the repudiation of heroics. Nemesis is rampant and lives must be sacrificed to her. There is a painfully personal element in the stakes at issue. The blood to be gambled for is no longer that of others, and consequently every cast of the die is fraught with dire significance.

By some lucky accident, or it may be by the merest chance—few will ever be able to appreciate the luck of that accident, or chance, as Carey did—the little shutter before the grille through which the warders "inspect" prisoners from time to time has been left slightly open. A small chink remains through which Carey can command a view, by pressing his cheek tightly against the cell door and almost forcing one eye into the niche, of the passage beyond, covering a range of barely four feet.

Just sufficient to whet the appetite. No more! Nothing to satisfy the all-consuming thirst for information; nothing to seriously alarm, and so put one on one's guard; much less, were it possible, from which one gleam of comfort or hope can be extracted. It is easy to imagine the curses, low and deep, launched against the fates which have sent the visitors at such an unpropitious hour; against the laggards who have not yet lighted the gas-jets.

The party passes the door behind which Carey strains his eye and every nerve and every muscle to catch a glimpse of them. The limit of the satisfaction he derives, in the moment that they flit past his line of vision, is that there are three men there. One is tall and straight, and wearing private outdoor attire. Another is much shorter and similarly clad; and the third is a prison warder. It would have been impossible to recognize any of them, owing to the uncertain light, even supposing the tall, straight man had not had his head averted as he

passed the cell door. They stop at the next cell, and, although it is but a few feet away, try as he may, the unhappy watcher cannot catch sight of even the coat-tails of either of the trio.

There is something familiar to Carey in the well-modulated, musical voice which requests the gaoler to open the cell door, and then dismisses him with instructions to remain within call, and subsequently directs his fellow plain-clothes man to take up a position about four paces higher up the corridor. If he could but recall it? What can it all mean?

The overwrought suspect finds temporary relief in a few sharp turns up and down the limited—very limited—space at his disposal. But his anxiety is not so easily satisfied. He is drawn by some irresistible force back to the chink at the side of the grille, and he is just in time to hear the warder summoned to the door of the next apartment.

It dawns upon him that his eye is of no use to him—at least, in the present situation. It is his ear he must rely upon. And he is successful in hearing the order: "Bring me a small table, a chair, some pens, ink, and foolscap paper. Oh! and bring some blotting-paper too, and be smart about it."

That voice again! If he could only get a glimpse of the tall, straight man—for he is sure it is the big one who is giving the orders. But it is otherwise ordained. He must possess his soul in patience, and trust to the chapter of accidents, which has already been propitious to the extent of half an inch of chink beside the grille in the door. If he could only get a single word with his friendly—or not unfriendly—warder. Unfortunately, that also is impossible. He has finished his duties for the day, and has gone for the night. The table and chair and the

writing paraphernalia arrive, and at last the gas is lighted. That is something gained. He will at least be able to see the visitors departing. The mental agony of the next hour needs no description; it is indescribable. He lives a year and ages ten within the period of those sixty minutes. Something portentous is taking place—but what? He dare not even try to think, for the suggestions which present themselves to his fevered brain are either too terrifying and horrible, or they are absurdly inadequate to account for all the ceremonial of the visit to the cell next door.

But the racking ordeal comes to an end at last. The attendant is again summoned; the table and other things are removed; the cell is securely locked, and the party return whence they came. The tall, straight man carries a number of sheets of foolscap, which have evidently been written upon, and as he passes the four-feet limit of his vision, in the full light, Carey recognizes—merciful God!—John Mallon, the relentless, unerring policeman.

CHAPTER XII

MAKING AN INFORMER *(continued)*

THE strain upon Carey has been hard, terribly hard, through the many days since his arrest. There is always the element of doubt as to how much Queen's evidence John Mallon has available about this sanguinary, calamitous, and wholly purposeless chapter of crime. There is not much testimony up to the present point to connect Carey with the tragedy, and while doubt exists, even in a shadowy form, there is room for hope, be it ever so minute.

But here is the last ray flickering out. There is no possibility of mistaking the meanfulness of this visit to the cell next door. True, the prisoner who has conferred with the detective may be altogether unconnected with the butchery of the Phœnix Park; but the period is one of great national excitement. The issues are between society and a vast assassination society the ramifications of which may be almost limitless—for aught authority knows. Indeed, and most probably, it is growing and gaining strength from the very immunity it has enjoyed for the past twelve months. This is not the time that John Mallon will be found giving personal attention to the mutterings of a common cut-throat. As certain as he is there in the unmistakable presence of those unpromising white-washed walls and those uncompromising iron bars, so sure is Carey that the occupant of the next dungeon

is one of the "boys" whose resolution has broken down. The broodings of solitude, the tension of isolation from his fellow-bravoes, has been too much for him, and he is seeking to save his carcase at the expense of his oath to the murder club, and of his companions in the late wholesale spilling of innocent blood. That is the explanation—the reading of the signs. But which of the twenty-three is it? Carey would willingly give one of his ears for the knowledge. Some know more than others, and there are those amongst the score and odd who hardly know of his connection with the affair at all—at least, nothing they could say about him would be likely to satisfy a jury of his guilt. On the other hand, a few whom he knows to be in captivity have damning proofs of his participation in the horrors of the "Invincibles." One at least of them, Curley—Daniel Curley—knows almost as much of the innermost working of the movement as the arch-conspirator himself.

If he could only find out who occupies the cell next to his!

He knocks at the wall. He puts his mouth close against it and tries to whisper through to the other side. His anxiety and his earnestness obliterate the obvious simplicity of the effort. There is, of course, no response. The unhappy wretch throws himself upon his pallet, and writhes in an agony of suspense and apprehension. If he could only!—the sense of his own helplessness is sickening, and he palls with apprehension when the word "informer" occurs to him.

There is no sleep for James Carey that night. Sleep has been a fickle jade since he was brought to Kilmainham, but she has altogether abandoned him now, and even exhaustion fails to fill her place. In his mad concern to convince himself as to who is the villain lying—aye!

probably slumbering, curse him!—within a few yards of where he vainly tosses his aching head, he conjures up the faces of his compatriots. Particularly the younger ones —his red-handed tools—Brady, who has scarcely reached manhood even yet, and Kelly, the youth who is only verging on his seventeenth year.

Then, amid the panorama which passes before his distorted vision, he sees the face of Tynan, the member of the Queen's Westminster Volunteers, who is so culpable. Tynan has sent over the cruel surgical knives which have produced those shambles in the Park on the black Saturday in May. In many other ways Tynan has well deserved police attentions. Carey suddenly remembers that he—Carey—he alone of all John Mallon's prisoners is the only man who has ever seen the precious scoundrel Tynan. He, and he alone, knows his name. He, and he alone of all the gang, could ever identify him.

The realization of these facts sets him thinking. He cogitates deeply and for a long time. How can he best turn his special knowledge to account? The thoughts that come would cause an exultant grin, were it not for their innate fiendishness and the depth of his own abject miseries.

Later, he mentally re-enacts the horrors of the Phœnix Park assassinations, and the various attempted murders he has participated in, and his other countless crimes, and, more particularly, his own inglorious part in each of the ghastly businesses. Doubtless he is further racked with the vanity and unprofitableness of "history-making," and the lack of compensation there is in the place he has now assuredly earned for himself in any future records, compared with his existing loneliness and his craven dread of what the near future holds in store for him.

Likely enough these reflections are followed by a few blasphemous invocations to the Great Master for personal assistance, and more would-be withering curses upon the body and the soul of the man in the next cell. Over and over again all the terrible business keeps repeating itself through that agonizing vigil—the minutes seeming hours, the hours years, and the night an eternity. If there is one honest prayer, it is for the coming of the morning, and with it the friendly warder, although not the least distressing of the criminal's doubts is as to the best manner of approaching his custodian with the least likelihood of arousing suspicion.

What a dreadful night it is! Think of it!

Alone! with a conscience weighted down with numberless crimes, both wicked and wanton. No healthy mind can conceive so awful an ordeal—such experience is reserved for the callous slayer of the innocent; the coward with a traitor's heart within the shadow of retribution.

Alone! with the vision of a rope dangling against one's shoulder, and imagination making it occasionally touch the neck.

Carey writhes upon his truckle-bed, groaning under the burden of his despair. If he only knew who is in the adjoining cell!

Morning comes at last, and with it the warder. Carey almost rushes to the door to meet him. Never is gaoler more welcome. With trembling lips and a very feeble, transparent effort of nonchalance the prisoner whispers, as the man crosses the threshold, "Who's in the next cell?"

And barely have the words passed his lips than he wishes them unsaid. Their reception is anything but encouraging. The warder looks neither to the right nor left. But that his mouth slightly moves as he gives a

warning "Sh!" he might be unconscious of his charge's presence.

Having deposited the breakfast—such as it is—and noted that the pallet is rolled up and the other usual duties of a prisoner properly performed, he moves silently to the door. As he passes the prisoner, however, and again without attempting to look at him, he murmurs, under his breath: "There's black business going on."

True, the disclosure of Carey's character goes to show that he was less than human, but whatever of nature there was in him would have been belied had not those strange, yet suggestive, words increased his anxieties a thousandfold. He can but regard them as confirmation of his worst fear—that there is an informer in the cell next to his.

"If I could only find out who it is!" he keeps repeating to himself, as he strides up and down the limited space allotted him, and past and re-past the neglected breakfast. Here is the chance he has waited for, hoped and prayed for, through that awful, dreary night. And it has gone past him. The warder, whom he has come to look upon as not unsympathetic, is unresponsive. But he must try again; he must be persistent. So much depends upon it.

At dinner-time he hazards another effort to obtain his keeper's confidence. This time the difficulty of concealing his agitation is increased, and it appears to him that the "Sh!" which is his only reward contains an amount of added surliness to its already uncompromising character.

More ghastly hours of torture and then at last come visitors again to the cell next door. John Mallon is there again, and this time he is accompanied by a tall, thin man, with a bald head and a very long white beard. There is no mistaking who it is. Again, there is a chink at the side

of the grille, and Carey has no difficulty in recognizing Mr. George Bolton, the Crown Solicitor. Once more the table and the writing materials are fetched, and after another long period spent in the cell, the detective again appears with much foolscap closely written over, and the now almost demented and thoroughly exhausted watcher is consigned to yet one more sleepless, mind-torn, soul-harassed night.

On the second morning the prisoner with blood-shot, starting eyes literally yells his demand to know who is the occupant of the cell next to his. This time he is successful. The warning "Sh!" has more of pity in it than previously, and a few moments later comes a half-frightened, hesitating whisper, "Daniel Curley."

Tremendous and weighty as is the blow when, at last, it falls, it carries with it a certain sense of relief. The mental strain is relaxed. Carey knows the worst, nor is he long in deciding upon a counter-plot. Consummate ruffian that he is, no sooner is he certain of the disloyalty of the one man who could most hurt him than he decides to meet the poor stratagem with superlative craft and dishonour. Now that he is convinced of the treachery of Curley, the word "informer" is endowed with a new meaning.

When next the warder approaches: "Tell Mr. Mallon I want to see him," says Carey—and having taken the plunge, he succeeds in possessing his soul in comparative patience, pending the arrival of his erstwhile greatest terror.

The next scene in the shocking drama of Carey's deceit is possibly the most dramatic of them all. Once again Carey hears the familiar tread of John Mallon along the corridor, and he listens to it with great expectancy—and but slight misgiving. He is conscious of the gaoler's key turning in his own cell door, this time, and, if it is given to

such abandoned wretches ever to experience pleasure, his heart bounds with a kind of joy. At least his neck is safe. That is his chief thought at the moment.

John Mallon enters the cell, and Carey, the murderer, gazes upon the tall, spare figure of a dark-bearded man, just about the age when a few silver hairs commence to streak the black.

Mallon is a curious mixture of strength and gentleness. Unemotional to a degree—inclined, indeed, to appear phlegmatic on such occasions—and what an occasion! He fixes his man with his sharp, piercing, steel-grey eyes, and in a low, musical voice, rather suggestive of sympathetic softness, if not kindliness, inquires: "You sent for me, Carey?"

"Yes, Mr. Mallon," replies the culprit. "I want to tell you all about it."

And then, so far as Carey is concerned, a bolt falls from the blue, and all his hopes of the last hour or two are ruthlessly dashed to the ground, and he is once again consumed with terror and despair.

"I don't want your evidence, Carey," comes in the same gentle voice that has spoken before. Hardly a muscle of the cold, matter-of-fact countenance moves. But there is in those eyes a look which conveys to the cringing wretch quite as plainly as words, "I've got the rope about your precious neck, James Carey, and I mean to hang you."

Down upon the floor of the prison cell the criminal flings himself, in utter hopeless abandonment, and screams for mercy. Tearing his hair in his frenzy, and anon clutching at the boots and the hem of the trousers of the great crime-hunter, with a flood of protestations, imprecations, and abject appeals, inseparably mixed, he fairly shrieks in his agony: "For God's sake, save my life!"

In response he is rudely shaken off and told to "try and be a man!" The mockery of the expression is probably unintentional.

The whirlwind of thoughts, with their accompanying terrifying visions—and the dangling rope—recur to Carey, and in their midst he sees, again, the face of the real "No. I." He is the only repository of that man's secret. It is a last chance, and he hazards it. Probably, also, as he discloses his knowledge of the identity in that case, his wicked mind conjures up the names of others calculated from their position and associations to prove attractive bait for his present purpose, although in his soul he knows he lies as his venomous lips form the indictment. The effect is at least a stay in the progress of his despair.

"Very well, then; you had better write what you have to say," says the official. "But, mark me, I promise you nothing."

For the third time writing material, a table, and the other paraphernalia are brought along the corridor. This time they come to Carey's cell. And for a long while he writes.

For the third time John Mallon passes out of the prison, possessed of much foolscap closely written over. This time the handwriting bears the evidence of such great agitation that it is scarcely decipherable.

Such are the qualms of conscience which produce informers—such are some of the means employed when great subtlety is pitted against great subtlety and the goal is the vindication of outraged justice. Such was the true inwardness of the mystic words uttered by James Carey when he entered the Kilmainham Court-house to give Queen's evidence against his fellow-assassins in one of the cruellest and most wanton crimes in history, "I was before ye's after all, Dan"—when all the world wondered.

And yet how different might not be the work of the historian in recording the happenings of those murder trials had James Carey known that the cell next to that in which he was confined was, but for the visits of Mallon and Bolton, all the time tenantless, and *empty !*

CHAPTER XIII

POTENTIAL HAPPENINGS AND SOME HUMOROUS EPISODES

IT was not until Michael Kávanagh, the car-driver, was called into the witness-chair that any of the instigators of the "Invincible" Murder Club were identified. In his examination of Kavanagh, Mr. Murphy, Q.C., the Crown Prosecutor, turned round to Mallon and got a photograph from him. This he handed up to the witness. Kavanagh declared it to be the picture of a man who used to come over to Dublin and put up at the Angel Hotel, on the quayside, between Carlisle Bridge and the Four Courts, and with whom Carey and Curley and Brady used to have occasional conferences. He had no notion of his name. Mr. Murphy got the portrait back and handed it to the clerk of the court to mark as an "exhibit" in the evidence —exhibit Number I., because it was the first that was handed in. As he did so he said, "That is Number I., in any case." The whole public of Ireland and England and America, except a few persons actually in the court-house, at once ran away with the idea that this man, who happened to be Patrick Joseph Tynan, a needy and seedy commercial traveller, was "No. I." in the Invincible conspiracy and the arch-conspirator. There never was a greater mistake. But on the whole it did not matter beyond this, that it enabled Tynan to bawl and show his teeth and grin through a tragedy-mask, and delude a

number of foolish extremists into keeping him, whereas he would probably have starved to death very shortly after he lost his situation with Sir Joseph Causton in England. He had, in reality, very little to do with the organization, and was merely a kind of messenger to Frank Byrne. True, he bought the knives that were used in the Park at Wiesse's, the surgical instrument makers, of the Strand, which Mrs. Byrne took over to Dublin concealed in her petticoats, and he took a few letters over to Ireland for his master, some of which, likely enough, contained money. Add to this that he ran away with Frank Byrne so soon as the police commenced to get active and you have every atom of claim he ever had upon the resources of the wildest of the wild physical force party in America. He was not even a blatherskite or a blatant ass until a silly mistake of the reporters, which the public accepted with such avidity that no one seemed anxious to contradict it, enshrouded him in a blaze of execrable notoriety.

When the photograph was handed back to counsel, and Mr. Murphy had passed it along to Mallon, the latter held it up for my inspection and asked me if I recognized the man. I did indeed. It was the likeness of a man I had met about ten days before with Frank Byrne in Paris. I wonder whether the circumstances of that meeting are worth telling? I had travelled to Cannes with Mr. Gladstone on, I think, the New Year's Day of 1883. While there I received a telegram from Frank Byrne, whom, of course, I knew very well as the secretary to the Irish Parliamentary party, having offices in St. Stephen's Chambers, Westminster, and who frequently contributed paragraphs to the news agency with which I was associated. In that telegram he used an expression that afterwards became invested with peculiar significance: "Am coming to Cannes to watch Gladstone, as you have been doing."

A letter of explanation from my office followed to the effect that Byrne was going to the South of France for his health, as he had been coughing and spitting blood of late, and, as I was required back to go over to Ireland in consequence of the arrest of the alleged Phœnix Park murderers, Byrne had been given an opportunity to recoup the expenses of his holiday by sending an occasional telegram as to the health and doings of Mr. Gladstone. Accordingly I paid a special visit to the Château Scott to bid adieu to Lord Wolverton, who was entertaining the then Premier, and to recommend to his consideration my successor, Mr. Frank Byrne. What the old Chief Whip of the Liberal party thought of me when Frank Byrne, with Tynan in close attendance, turned up in Cannes to take my place, and he found out a few days afterwards—as all the world knew—that they were at that very time on the run from the responsibility of a considerable share in the great Irish tragedy, history deponeth not. Suffice it that when, a few months later, I had occasion to write to his lordship upon an entirely different subject, I got no reply.

I well remember that beautiful January morning when I said good-bye to Lord Wolverton in the delightful garden of the Château Scott. The Rev. Stephen Gladstone and the Hon. Spencer Lyttelton were also there. News had just reached the party that Mr. William O'Brien, an Irish journalist, had beaten the Solicitor-General for Ireland, and had been elected a Member of Parliament for Mallow, and they told me that the Grand Old Man was anxious to know if I could enlighten him as to who Mr. O'Brien was. This I was able to do by reminding Mr. Lyttelton that, when Mr. Gladstone had visited Ireland some little time before, a very persistent representative of the *Freeman's Journal* had insisted upon interviewing the

Prime Minister on board the mail-packet on his arrival at Kingstown, and had put him through a strenuous cross-examination as to his Irish proclivities—which someone said afterwards was like endeavouring to extract the eye-tooth of a rhinoceros with a cork-screw. The interviewer, I explained, was the William O'Brien who had just defeated the law officer.

On my way home through Paris, Frank Byrne met me at the Lyons Station and introduced me to a friend of his whom he represented to be a "Mr. Tisdale," but who turned out to be Patrick J. Tynan. They carried me off to a restaurant to dinner and we finished up the night at No. 8, Rue de Bac, with Patrick Casey, his brother, James Casey, Eugene Davis, and one or two other choice spirits of the "advanced" Irish party. "Tisdale," whom I had only met an hour or so before, introduced me to Casey as his "son-in-law"—which I allowed to pass as a harmless joke, but which led to complications it is not necessary to go into here—and, during the evening, sang a song called "Seeing Nelly Home," of which he claimed the authorship of the words, wherein, of course, he lied again. Mallon was able to tell me all that occurred on that night, including an incident that happened in "the small hours" after we had left Casey's place, when one of the party—a wild young enthusiast who regarded his employment in a Paris haberdashery establishment as a form of exile—succeeded in getting into conflict with a couple of gendarmes, who claimed his immediate attendance at the Prefecture with a view to the certainty of being able to continue the argument on the morrow. I believe that, owing to the mixed company the young fellow was affecting, the authorities "rubbed it in" a bit, for the occurrence ended in his absenting himself from Paris for good, and he is now holding a responsible position connected

with London newspaper work. Undoubtedly that party was under the very careful surveillance of the emissaries of Scotland Yard on that eventful evening.

The extradition of Byrne and Tynan had not been asked for at that time and they journeyed down to Cannes, where they put up at the Hôtel des Pins, to which I had recommended the former as being the most decent place to stop at near the Château Scott. Byrne sent over a few telegrams and paragraphs about Mr. Gladstone and his doings, and followed in his wake to Nice. Byrne and Tynan witnessed the Battle of Flowers from beneath the actual balcony on which the right honourable gentleman was accommodated. Curiously enough, at the hotel in the pine woods they had made the acquaintance of a most affable Polish count—a charming fellow, speaking very broken English, possessed of ample monetary resources and apparently very few friends on the Riviera. He was a pretty lonely visitor to the South of France, and as he showed the greatest appreciation of their breezy *bonhomie*, and seemed always prepared to pay rather more than his share of the "whack," Byrne and Co. took compassion on him and graciously permitted him to join their "set." He accompanied them to Nice, and seemed genuinely crushed when they found it necessary to scamper back to Paris—things were moving pretty rapidly in Ireland at the time, and it is possible they saw additional security in being a little nearer to a seaport from which they could sail under a foreign flag to the United States. In any case, the French Government refused to extradite them, and they made all haste to join an American liner at Havre.

Now, at Havre a very curious thing happened which, had the *dénouement* worked out differently, might have had a very natural bearing upon the future careers of these two

notorious sons of Erin. The Polish count—I cannot pretend to be exact as to what he said his name was, but it was something that sounded very much like "Count Polowhiskey"—had so sadly missed the sweet society of the precious pair, and had pined for the renewal of it so deeply, that, being a man of pleasure, he had suddenly made up his mind to follow them, and he turned up quite unexpectedly at the shipping place. They were glad to see him for several reasons, and the reunion was a joyous one all round. By a happy circumstance, also, the count's yacht happened to be lying off that particular port, and each agreed that it would be a fitting termination to their holiday in France that they should have a "good time," and a short cruise, on the Count's boat, while awaiting the Atlantic steamer. The Count had to exercise his powers of persuasion, for neither of the two was a particularly good sailor; but at last his genial way of forcing his hospitalities prevailed, and the trip was arranged. The party were, indeed, on their way from the hotel to the pier, with the object of going aboard, when Frank Byrne accidentally met a journalistic friend of his. Of course, he introduced "My friend the Count." "Who did you say he was?" mildly questioned the scribe, while the Count was taken with a sudden fit of coughing, and between the spasms was seen to be winking furiously at the newcomer. "The Count Polowhiskey, a jolly good fellow we met down in Cannes." "Um! You'd better be careful, Byrne, for he bears a very striking resemblance to Detective-Inspector Morris Moser, of Scotland Yard." Poor Moser was desperately disappointed, and the calamity of the recognition only shows by what very slender chances the best-laid plans of the Criminal Investigation Department may "gang a-gley." Whatever the international amenities in such cases, and without the slightest regard

for any diplomatic correspondence that might have happened, and probably would have eventuated afterwards, had Moser once succeeded in getting his quarry on board the yacht there is not the shadow of a doubt that he would have hoisted the British flag and have sailed her into English waters and brought the pair to trial. In that case the history of the Invincible movement might have been writ quite differently. I have heard it whispered also that the pressman who brought about the *contretemps* "lost" his portmanteau in a most mysterious manner on his way back to London, and never succeeded in recovering it. I was assured at the time, however, that it contained no papers or the like that could have been of the slightest use or interest to the police or anyone but their rightful owner.

Before leaving the reflections that are induced by the recollection of the day on which Michael Kavanagh was placed in the witness-chair, I am constrained to refer to the curious use of an example of legal terminology that came under my notice and which I have never yet seen in print. I give it with less reluctance for the reason that it goes to show that even in those strenuous and alarming times the Irish bar was capable of showing us occasional glimpses of light to relieve the prevailing shade. I was sitting almost immediately in the rear of counsel for the defence. In the preliminary magisterial examination of the prisoners, held in the Kilmainham Court-house, Dr. Webb, Q.C., was retained for the great majority of the prisoners in the dock, and Mr. Richard Adams appeared in one or two special cases. Dr. Webb was an able and learned gentleman, who was somewhat sandy and very scant of inches. What he lacked in stature, however, he made up for in energy and fire. I hope I shall be forgiven for saying that he struck me as a

remarkably fussy little person, with all the rapidity of movement and the scintillation and the twiddliness of half an ounce of mercury when you try to balance it in the centre of a dinner-plate. He used a single eye-glass, through which he examined his papers and glared at a witness. In moments of supreme excitement and when anxious to indicate profound surprise, he had the curious habit of snatching the glass from his eye, twirling it round vigorously at the end of its securing cord, and suddenly releasing it so that it flew upwards and over his shoulder and fell suspended at the middle of his back. A moment later, when he had to refer to his brief, he ran his fingers rapidly over his chest from one arm to the other, with a movement as though tweaking the strings of a harp, vainly seeking the truant thread, and it then became the delight of the junior bar—nay, it was the positive duty of the junior bar—to gently secure the monocle and gracefully hand it back to the doctor. A short, sharp, staccato "Thank you," accompanied by a fleeting artificial smile and a strange little, jerky nod, and the doctor resumed at the point where he had left off and as if there had been no break at all. Mr. Adams was, at the time, the principal leader-writer for the *Freeman's Journal;* a bright, genial soul who loved living and seemed to make everyone glad with him. He was one of the keenest, unspiteful wits of the bar in Ireland, and was later on appointed County Court Judge of Limerick—a position akin to our Recorderships. He was called away when his world—the world that he helped to lighten and brighten—could better have spared one of its less brilliant stars. Dr. Webb had been retained in a great hurry and had not yet had time to properly master his brief, or even to become familiar with the names of his score or so of clients. In the course of the evidence the name of "Kenny" was casually mentioned.

"Kenny! Kenny!" repeated the doctor, rapidly turning over the pages of his brief. "Do I appear for Kenny, Richard?" he asked in his excitement, and he fixed his eye-glass.

"No, doctor," answered Adams; "he's escaped them."

"That's good, Richard, that's good! Where has he got to?" said the Q.C.

"Glasnevin," murmured Adams in a sepulchral undertone.

Glasnevin is the principal cemetery, and Kenny was the man who was assassinated by the Invincibles under the railway arch in Saville Place.

"Ah!" from Webb, and the glass began to wildly whirl. "How did he get there?" and away went the monocle.

"*We* shot him, doctor," mysteriously whispered Adams.

The junior bar handed round the eye-glass. "Thank you," said the doctor, finishing the usual nod with a reproachful glance at his colleague, and he commenced to make notes with much vigour.

A few days after this I was passing the office of *Sport*, in Middle Abbey Street, and I saw "Dick" Adams standing on the steps lighting a cigar. I pulled up my car and jumped down to ask him how things were going.

"I have absolutely no further interest in the business," said he. "As you know, I was only interested for two of them, and we've both got off and have no further fears for our certain security. What more would you have a budding young legal practitioner worry himself about than the perfect safety of his clients?"

I was considerably puzzled, for I could see no likelihood of any of the prisoners escaping so readily, knowing all that I knew.

"Who were you concerned for, Adams?" I said.

"Michael Kavanagh and James Carey," replied he, with an affectation of considerable dignity and self-complacency.

That was the first intimation I had that on the following day I should see Carey on the witness-table in the *rôle* of informer.

CHAPTER XIV

GRAVE AND GAY

THE last time I met "Dick" Adams was in a well-known supper and oyster room in Dublin, about a couple of years before he died. I was supping with about the oldest of my surviving journalistic friends in the Sister Isle, when Adams sauntered over to our table and joined us.

"Tell, me, Judge," said I, "and how is dear old Limerick?"

"Well!" replied the legal light, with the same old, highly-contagious glint of humour in his eyes that won him the happy remembrance of all who ever met him, and the affection of by far the greater half, "I'd like you to believe—and, relying upon the information afforded me the last time I was there, it is so—that nothing in the last decade or two has, nor is anything likely to, alter alluring, luxuriant Limerick. It is just the same as ever for the casual visitor—there are only two hotels to stop at, and if you go to the 'Victoria,' you wish you were at 'Cruse's,' and if you put up at 'Cruse's,' you kick yourself because you haven't gone to the 'Vic.' I always stay at 'Cruse's.' The last time I went Assizes I drove up to the hotel in the usual way, and left 'boots' to collect my travelling kit and discharge the carman. Before going to my room I always wait for a few moments' chat with 'boots.' Pat—that is the 'boots'—knows more local

news than any other person in the ancient city, and he usually saves it up for me, so that I shall be *au courant* with the domestic situation of the neighbourhood before I go on to the bench. Nothing escapes his vigilance, from the floating small silver of the appreciative traveller to a casual birth or a prospective burglary.

" ' Patsey,' said I, ' is there any news ? '

" ' Devil a word,' replied Pat, with a look of abject contrition, as though his last remaining excuse for existence had been staked and lost.

" ' Come ! come, Pat, be quick—I've no time to waste,' said I.

" ' Sure, you're right, Judge,' said he. ' You know old —— that keeps the drapery stores away up the street there, with the two fine girls and the young fellow that never did any work until the aunt died and left him the hundred pounds, and then he came before your honour for breaking the head of a policeman—him that's the life and soul of the meetings when it's no use in listening to anybody but the priests ? '

" ' I know him well,' said I.

" ' Do you ? ' said he ; ' he's dead.'

" ' Dear ! dear ! ' said I. ' And what did he die of ? '

" ' The drink,' said he ; ' just the drink, good luck to him ! '

" ' Come ! now, Patsey,' said I, ' did you ever know anybody to die in Limerick except from the drink ? '

" ' Well, Judge darlin',' replied Pat, thrusting his fist up under the side of his cap and scratching his head vigorously, ' now you come to mention it, I seem to remember that about seven years ago one of them lay-brothers up at the monastery beyant there, belonging to the Third Order of St. Francis, if my remembrance is right, was *said* to have died of the influenzie.'

"What kind of a change would you have in a glorious city like that, and particularly when, as you may well understand, the absorbing conviviality of the populace makes the office of the county court judge of Limerick almost a sinecure?"

Perhaps the most lively time I ever had in Dublin was on the occasion when a section of the Metropolitan Police went on strike. The differences between the men and the authorities did not last very long, but for a couple of evenings or so existence was rendered particularly exciting. The exercise of a considerable amount of stratagem was required to avoid an incidental prod with an inch or two of cold steel. One of the line regiments stationed in Dublin was called out to do substituted service for the rebellious men in blue. The occasion might have been specially arranged as a grand benefit for the glaziers of the city, for the soldiers kept the populace on the move, and the latter, as they flitted from place to place, let fly from time to time with the small granite ammunition they had an ample supply of, until there was scarcely a whole sheet of plate glass left in the metropolis. "Let's go and smash the b—— *Irish Times*," I heard one enthusiast suggest. He, together with about fifty others, proceeded to fill pockets from a pile of stones lying at the foot of Sir John Gray's statue in Sackville Street. I and some brother pressmen toddled up to the *Irish Times* office, then in Lower Abbey Street, and advised those in charge as to what they might expect. Fortunately the shutters were already up at the windows of the advertising department on the ground floor. There was just time to bolt the door and to make our way up to the reporters' room on the second floor (I think it was), when the fusillade began. I have a vivid recollection of how we stood with our backs to the wall that overlooked the street and to the brick

strip there was between the two windows, while the room was pretty nearly half filled with chunks of the very best Connemara macadam-road-making granite.

It was on that same evening that I was standing at the corner of Middle Abbey Street and Sackville Street with Edward Houston. His name afterwards became very familiar to the British public in connection with the *Times'* charges against Mr. Parnell, and the letters partly manufactured and wholly produced by one Richard Pigott, of infamous memory. If I may be allowed a digression in regard to the culminating point of "Parnellism and Crime" and the Pigott forgeries, I should like to say this. I cannot understand how the *Times* ever came to allow themselves to be deceived by the man Pigott. Even supposing they were sucking babes in the game of Irish politics, which would seem to be justified by the fact that they published a positive statement to the effect that the Phœnix Park tragedy was the outcome of a deliberate plot to assassinate Lord Frederick Cavendish and the killing of Mr. Burke was an incidental accident, when all the world knew that it could not be so, how came it about that Mr. Edward Houston was so completely and so innocently taken in? Dr. Patton, their trusted correspondent in Ireland, knew all about the wily ways of Pigott. He had "had some," as schoolboys say. Mr. Forster had long ago been a victim to the plausibility of the lying ruffian, and had discovered him to be a blackmailer. Without worrying to "put him through Stubbs," if the *Times* had inquired as to his antecedents of the police they would have discovered, as I also knew, that for years Pigott had been engaged in raising subscriptions for Irish national purposes in the United States and publishing special limited editions of his paper for the American market, containing "subscription lists" that were

never allowed to see the light in his home issues. If Pigott had been desirous of supplying the *Times* with a few balls of string and a sheet or two of brown paper and had wanted to have a few copies of their paper on "sale or return," and "per contra," it is highly probable that they would have found him out right enough. Anyway, Houston and I were standing talking at the corner of a street in the heart of Dublin. Houston had been a reporter on the staff of the *Daily Express*, the paper that was edited by Dr. Patton. At the time I write of, he was secretary to the Constitutional Club, and was taking a keen interest in the supply of "emergency men" to look after "evicted farms," as caretakers. Coming down Middle Abbey Street, we observed a crowd of men, women and boys on the run. They were pursued by a company of red-coats with fixed bayonets at the charge. I confessed that I had no stomach for such occasions, with their uncertain and, sometimes, unpropitious endings. I proposed putting the width of Sackville Street between myself and possible accident. "Stand your ground, man," said the valiant Houston. "We'll tell them we are connected with the Press." It was splendid to see the perfect faith of the young Constitutional Clubite in the potency of the magic word. But I did not see my way to rely upon the appreciation for the dignity of the "fourth estate" that might be slumbering in the bosoms of the lads of a Surrey, or a Sussex, or a Suffolk regiment—whichever it was. I expressed this view and left my friend. With a gesture and sneer of gentle disapprobation of my invalorous discretion, he mounted a large round stone that decorated the corner of the pavement with a view to protecting an adjacent lamp-post from the knocks of scurrying jaunting-cars. On the other side of the roadway I found Mr. Hopewell of the *Irish Times*, and several other journalists,

examining the head of a small boy. The youngster had not been quick enough for the soldiers. A bayonet had just caught the lobe of his ear, which it had completely split. It had then glanced along the side of his neck, on which it had left a slight furrow from which blood was oozing. We had hardly time to wonder at the narrowness of the child's escape, when we caught sight of Houston coming across the street with even greater alacrity than I had displayed. Nor did the fact that he had his right hand behind him appear to impede the vigour of his leaps and bounds. "I have the bayonet," said he. I understand that is a peculiarly Irish way of expressing exactly what he meant. Then he made other observations anent the respectability and appearance of certain units of the British army that were especially uncomplimentary as coming from so ardent a loyalist. Hopewell ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, that Houston was bleeding, so we hoisted the latter on to a car and rushed him off to Jervis Street Hospital. The sufferer meanwhile explained to me how the catastrophe had happened. "When they came running up to me," he said, "I just waved me hand to them. 'It's all right,' said I. 'Press,' said I, '*Daily Express*'—and with that an—x, y, z fool put the bayonet into me."

The delicious cadence of Houston's accent and the virtuous and energetic vehemence he displayed in the telling of his woes lent a humour to the story that appealed to all of us. Even the house surgeon who examined the wound laughed at the nature and the position of the puncture, coupled with the standing and surroundings of the patient—so soon as he had ascertained that the weapon had only entered about an inch and a half into a fleshy part. Houston was most indignant at this. And he was in no wise mollified when the medical man gravely

advised him that a good deal of the resultant inconvenience could be obviated by the addition of a horse-collar to the ordinary office chair.

– On yet another occasion when the social nerves of Dublin were somewhat highly strung, I was proceeding along the western side of Westmoreland Street. I noticed, across the way, from a score to five-and-twenty young fellows, standing apparently in very earnest conversation. There was no evidence of disagreement, there was no noise. To all outward appearance, from my point of observation at least, it might have been a gathering of young religious enthusiasts, about to open an *al fresco* prayer-meeting. Suddenly someone in the gathering exclaimed : " Who says 'hooroo' for Tipperary ? I say 'hooroo' for Dublin ! " And, as it seemed, every man threw down the hat of the man next to him and jumped upon it. In less time than it takes to think, there was a wild yell that gave place to a concentrated mumbling, suggestive of glowering rage. The whole peaceful party was transformed in an instant to a struggling, seething mass of energy indiscriminately lashing out to effect the maximum amount of personal disfigurement. The entire adventure did not occupy more than a minute ; then, in a flash, the aimless combatants completely vanished down a side street as though they had been swallowed up. There remained not a sign —not even the sound of retreating footsteps. It was truly wonderful. I wandered across the road to inspect the battle-ground. But for a plentiful sprinkling of blood-drops that were there I could have persuaded myself I had been day-dreaming. I mentioned the matter afterwards to a policeman. He explained the incident to me in this way : " Ah ! They're a quick, hot-blooded, excitable lot of youngsters, and no doubt they hadn't anything else to do."

One trait in the Irish character to be deeply deprecated is a tendency to allow political differences to affect social relations to the extent of descending into grave personalities. The following incident will illustrate, to some extent, my meaning. It occurred at the time that the divergence of popular feeling and sentiment in Ireland had brought about what was known as the "Parnell split." The scene was a public place of considerable repute amongst commercial men in Dublin. One of the actors was a prominent Nationalist, who was credited with "advanced" views, and it was more than whispered that he had been active in the Fenian Brotherhood in the days that are fled. The other was also a Nationalist, none the less prominent, but of milder type—what may be called the Parliamentary agitation species. The fiery one stood silently glaring at the moderate man for some moments. The glared-at was conscious of the glare, but affected not to notice it; probably he was conscious, also, that the stare of the other was not attracted by his physical charms, for in that matter he knew himself not to be over-endowed by capricious Nature. Truth to tell, he had been far away when the best material was being used up in placing the Adonis and Apollo varieties upon the market. Finally, he could stand the offensive scrutiny no longer. He demanded: "Why do you persecute me, Mr. ——, in this way?" "Don't speak to me," demanded he of stirring methods. "Dare to soil my name by causing it to come from your renegade mouth, and I'll not strike ye, sir, that would be beneath me dignity, but I'll just whisk ye around and *cut the tail off ye.*"

On the other hand, when parties in Ireland do manage to see eye-to-eye with each other and succeed in keeping along the same path when there are many cross-roads and easily mistaken by-ways, the amount of devotion

accorded to chosen leaders surpasses that to be found in any other country. I remember going to the rooms of a loyal supporter of Mr. Parnell when the shadow of his blackest hour was the most dense. There were several of us, journalists and others. Our host was a familiar public figure. He bade us "be seated," while he continued standing on the hearth-rug with his head still covered. "This is the *sanctum sanctorum*—the holy of holies," he explained. "You'll see that I have a few articles of vertu here and there. And you'll notice a small collection of remarkable pictures on me walls. On the right you may observe what is said to be a remarkably fine portrait of the Saviour of the World—after Murillo, the great Sevilleian master of the seventeenth century. On the left there is a picture of His blessed mother, a very fine early copy, I am credibly informed, of a famous painting by Michael Angelo Buonarotti, whose name will be well known to some of you. In the centre—Charles Stewart Parnell, God bless him!" said the fervent patriot, as he turned to a heavily-framed oleograph over the fireplace. He reverently raised his hat from his head, pressing it to the region of his heart with both hands, and he slightly bent one knee as he repeated the benediction.

CHAPTER XV

THE VAGARIES OF JUSTICE

THERE were several leading circumstances connected with the trial of the "Invincibles" at Green Street Court-house that were enigmatic to the public at the time. I believe that I am in an almost unique position in being able to clear them up, and although they have probably become exhausted of interest so far as Great Britain is concerned, there are several phases of ethics involved in the explanations themselves that will make them acceptable to many of my readers both in Ireland and America.

The seeming disproportion in the fates, as regulated by the Government, of Tom Caffery and Delaney struck most people at the time. Both were on the assassins' car that Kavanagh drove away from the scene of slaughter. Five men travelled on that vehicle. Two of them were accounted for by the executioner; one, the driver, died in South Africa, having lived in comparative luxury, enjoying the hospitality and protection of the authorities, from the time and as the corollary of his assistance in the witness-box. Caffery gave one the impression of a somewhat soppy, careless, self-neglectful kind of fellow, who would be anything according to the company he was in. A man who appreciated the "glad hand," and the hospitable "half-pint" far better than the potentialities of manual labour—a sort that cared less for the relative comfort of the army than he was apt to worry about the

sense of restricted freedom that the discipline implied. In fact, he was a fairly average specimen of the Irish "omadhaun," and was so regarded by his companions—a fellow who would pull a car out of a ditch and could be trusted to keep a pipe alight or mind the coats at a fight, kick an objectionable stranger, or run a mile with a message, so long as there was a drink at the end of the task. It was characteristic of him that he pleaded guilty to the charge of complicity in the Park murders, and his explanation for adopting that course was that he "did not want to give anybody any trouble." That is what he told Mallon, and I am perfectly convinced that had it come to his knowledge that Billington had any qualms of conscience, he would have expressed himself as truly sorry for him. It seemed a pity to carry the law to the utmost limit of finality in this man's case, while side by side with it was the almost farcical treatment meted out to the snivelling and contemptible ruffian Delaney. The latter, who was still "doing time" for the attempt on the life of Mr. Justice Lawson, was formally tried, sentenced to death, respited, and subsequently released, and is still probably battening on Government patronage. And this because he went on whimpering and sneaking and babbling, albeit he was never able to tell anything truthful that the Executive were not already in possession of.

Michael Fagan and Daniel Curley, like Caffery, also suffered the extreme penalty, as accessories before the fact. They were both, together with Joe Hanlon, who got off with a comparatively light sentence, in Skin-the-Goat's cab when Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish were assassinated. They took no actual part in the perpetration of the crimes, although their intentions and their preparations were undoubtedly black and wicked. It was thought that Mr. Burke would drive through the Park,

and the old grey mare was to be driven almost beside, but rather in advance of, the Under Secretary's conveyance, which was to be bored over to the side-walk, so that it would have to come to a standstill to escape a spill. Then the cab passengers, who were armed to the teeth, were to see there was no interference by any escort, or police protectors, that Mr. Burke might have with him, during the time that Brady and Kelly performed their parts in the bloody business, and they were to cover the retreat of Kavanagh's precious car-load. The differentiation in the degree of criminality appertaining to Fagan and Hanlon, and particularly to George Smith, who was associated with the Board of Works in Ireland, and was the only one of the gang who knew Mr. Burke by appearance, was also noticeable. Smith was in the Park to point out the victim to Carey, so that the latter could signal to the others, and this he did by muttering to the arch-conspirator: "Mind the man in grey." Curley, again, was certainly "in the Park," and he was a member of the Invincible committee, but James Mullett was the chairman of that body, and to him and McCaffery were traced the manipulation of cheques that had provided the sinews of war. On this latter point there can be no question. I have already, elsewhere, dealt with the cheque that Edward McCaffery cashed with the wife of the publican in the neighbourhood of Armagh. In regard to Mullett, I have before me at the moment of writing, in the form of a comment upon a portion of an article published by Patrick J. Tynan, entitled, "The Irish National Invincibles," the following words, in the handwriting of John Mallon: "Pat Egan and James Mullett, a temperance man and a publican, Nov. '81. Cheque to Mullett for £100, from Pat Egan, per ——"

I have substituted a blank for two initials that Mallon supplies, because they happen to be those of a good friend

of mine who is a highly respected Dublin citizen, because I am convinced that he knew no more as to the purpose for which that cheque was intended than a babe unborn, and because in the sere and yellow leaf of a career of public honour I would not risk the infliction of a moment's pain.

Wherein, then, was the justification for the difference made in the official dealings with Curley, on the one hand, and Mullett and McCaffery on the other, and between Caffery and Fagan, who were hanged, and Delaney, Hanlon and Smith, who were but mildly punished? It existed in the criminal records of the three men who were sent to their doom—records that were well within the knowledge of the police, beyond the possibilities of doubt, although the chain of evidence that could have been produced in the witness-chair was so incomplete that it was impolitic to put them on trial for their offences. It may seem paradoxical, but it is none the less true—in any case, I venture to affirm it—that Caffery would never have been hanged for the crime to which he pleaded guilty, had it not been for other offences of which he was never openly accused and for which he was not put upon his trial.

There had been two very dark agrarian murders—one at Loughrea and the other at Barbaville. In the former case, Mr. Blake, a land agent, and his escort had been waylaid and riddled with lead, and at Barbaville, Mrs. Smith, a small landowner, was cruelly done to death by similar methods. Now! the weapons used in those atrocious outrages were of a rather good class, and far different from those that might be expected to be in the possession of ordinary peasants for the purpose of scaring crows. Mallon traced the source whence they came. They found their way *viâ* Dublin, through Dan Curley. They were consigned to a family connection of Curley's as "stair-rods," and some of them were transferred to Loughrea by Caffery,

while others were taken down to Barbaville by Fagan. I am not sure about the actual participation of Caffery in the slaughter of Mr. Blake, although there is grave reason for believing that he did take part in the Tubbercurry murders; but Mallon affirms that there is no shadow of doubt that Fagan not only superintended the "removal" of Mrs. Smith, but actually used one of the rifles. I do not think that these circumstances have been published before, but they are the facts as asserted by John Mallon, and they actuated the law officers and the Castle officials, who decide these matters, in the selection of those undoubted accessories before the fact, the penalty for whose crime is death, who should be subjected to the extreme penalty.

CHAPTER XVI

ARRAIGNED FOR THE THIRD TIME

THERE are some incidents that occurred during the trials at Green Street Court-house that it is painful to write about, but I am constrained to give them because I believe they have never yet been published, and principally for the reason that they may throw a certain light upon the probable mental balance of one of the chief figures that may be credited to his excuse. The extreme youth of the prisoner Timothy Kelly—he had but just turned seventeen when he was first placed in the dock—made his appearance to stand his trial for murder an extremely distressing one. Throughout the proceedings I was sitting quite close to the dock, rather above it, and in such a position that I had an opportunity of observing every movement that took place within it. Kelly was placed upon trial three times, two juries failing to arrive at a verdict in his case. I am not sure that the third arraignment constituted a record, but I am not aware of any other case in which a prisoner has been placed before a third jury for the same offence and with precisely the same evidence being relied upon by the prosecution. He was a slip of a boy, rather tall and thin, with a good stamp of features, but somewhat pale—as might have been expected after several weeks' detention in prison. He had not the slightest vestige of hair, or even down, upon his lip, and he comported himself, in the main, without any

show of undue anxiety or nervousness—with the *débonnaire* unaffectedness of a studious schoolboy who is really interested in an attractive and entertaining lecture. His occasional "asides," terrible as they were in themselves, were unaccompanied by any particular demonstration of callousness. Within two hours of his first trial commencing, and while Mr. Attorney-General Porter was framing a terrible indictment against him, he turned to the chief warder of Kilmainham, who sat beside him in the dock, and rather earnestly whispered a question. The nature of it was pretty obvious, for he indicated Mr. Fred Gallaher, who had just come into court and was standing near the ordinary press-box. The gaoler nodded and the prisoner appeared perfectly satisfied and riveted his attention once more upon counsel's formidable accusations. After a few minutes, however, he bent across again and made some request that was responded to by his custodian discovering a tiny piece of pencil, carefully pointing it, and handing it to him together with a small scrap of paper. The prisoner hastily scribbled a few words, carefully folded what was evidently intended for a note, for he endorsed it on the outside, and concealed it in the palm of his hand. It appeared to me that he was conscious of being watched, and that he hoped, by breaking the continuity of his purpose, to distract attention. After a while he handed the scrap of paper back to the warder and again indicated Gallaher by inclining his head in the direction of that gentleman. As I have explained elsewhere, Mr. Gallaher was the editor of *Sport*, and was very well known and generally popular throughout the length and breadth of Dublin. When at last the communication from the dock reached the pressman, I noticed that he read it, and then, when he caught the prisoner's eye, he nodded to him, and Kelly once more settled down to listen to Mr. Porter's

speech with the utmost show of contentment. All this puzzled me considerably, and I confess I was consumed with curiosity. At the luncheon interval I found my friend Gallaher and begged him to show me what the note contained. "Ah!" said the scribe, "it's a shame the poor fellow cannot get out to do a little bit of business for himself—so he's asked me to do it for him," and he handed me Kelly's paper. It contained a request that Gallaher would put a shilling for him on some horse that was running in a race taking place that day. I learned the same evening that there was no likelihood of there being any difficulty about conveying cash to the prisoner, for the horse he had selected was beaten; and I have reason for the belief that owing to the strangeness of the request, coming whence it did, the transaction cost the sportsman and several members of his staff considerably more than a shilling apiece.

Leaving the court when the jury retired to consider their verdict at the end of the third trial, Kelly caught sight of some erstwhile companion, high up in the gallery at the back of the spacious chamber, and waved his hand. Then, in less time than it takes to think of the weird act, he raised his arm to its full extent, and bending his wrist so that his extended forefinger pointed downwards, he made a sweeping motion so as to indicate a circle round his neck, and finished by tossing his fist upwards as though suddenly tightening a cord. He accompanied this action with a cluck of the tongue, and followed it by a jerk of the thumb over his shoulder towards the jury-box. His meaning was fully apparent, and it was the more extraordinary from the fact that only a short time before, the majority of that same "twelve men and true" had been moved to actual tears by the eloquent words of Mr. D. B. Sullivan, who had pleaded, as few others could have done,

in his defence. Never have I seen jurymen so genuinely affected as were those who tried Timothy Kelly for the third time, by the masterly oration that earned from Mr. Justice O'Brien the flattering encomium that "Mr. Sullivan had, by his defence of that prisoner, placed himself in the front rank of the Irish bar." Yet Kelly himself saw the whole thing very differently. That he was firmly convinced of what was about to happen there can be no sort of doubt, and when at last he was brought back into the dock to hear the verdict pronounced, he emphasized his belief in no uncertain way. As he stood there at the bar he narrowly scrutinized the twelve men as they made their way back to their places, then leaning over to the warder, he said with a smile, and in a voice that caused his words to reach me with great distinctness: "I'll bet you a bob this lot hangs me." Within very little more than three minutes he had been sentenced to death.

There was a good deal of comment at the time as to the reasons for the Crown taking the, so far as my knowledge goes, unprecedented course of putting this youth upon his trial for the third time, after two very carefully selected juries had found themselves unable to agree upon the evidence of his guilt. That the decision was not arrived at without much anxious and careful deliberation I am, however, in a position to positively affirm. Indeed, there were many consultations on the matter amongst the highest authorities, without any definite decision being come to. Lord Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant, approached the matter with solicitude and great perturbation, and perhaps it is not too much to say that his very strong leanings were on the side of leniency. The mature legal opinion was that upon the evidence a conviction ought to follow, but even that did not satisfy his lordship. In the end he sent for Mallon.

"Tell me, Mallon," said Lord Spencer, "have you any reason for putting this young man on trial for the third time?"

"No," replied the detective, "I have no desire or wish to see the ordinary practice extended. My duty ends with making persons amenable. I have no interest in convictions."

"Have you any reason for thinking that the prisoner Kelly is guilty?"

"I have, my lord," solemnly answered Mallon.

"And what is it?"

"He told me so himself."

That was the tipping of the beam. It is true that Kelly did not make any secret of his participation in the Park murders nor in the attack on Mr. Field, the cruelly ill-used juryman, to Mallon. He never had any desire to turn Queen's evidence, nor did he, as a fact, ever disclose anything that directly implicated his associates. He did, however, after his conviction, ask to see Mallon, and when the policeman attended him in his cell, he begged for advice as to whether it was likely to make any difference to his prospects of salvation if he made a clean breast of it to the authorities and told everything he knew. Mallon has assured me he told the doomed youth that in his opinion nothing he could tell or say would affect his prospects in this world. His end was inevitable. The question of his soul was one between him and his God alone. As a conscientious and a practising Catholic, the sturdy policeman sought to comfort the convict by expressing his firm belief that if he made full confession to his confessor and accompanied it with perfect and fervent contrition his spiritual welfare would be secure. That, and that alone would serve him. In all else there was no shadow of hope.

" Are you quite sure, Mr. Mallon ? "

" As certain as I am of the Divine Promise."

" Very well, then ; I'll say nothing."

Kelly had been a choir boy at one of the chapels in Dublin, and was regarded as a very good lad of considerable promise before he joined the Invincible conspiracy. It is on record that after his final interview with Mallon he listened earnestly to the ministrations of the priest and the pious sisters who attended him in his closing hours on earth, and throughout the night before his execution he awaked the echoes of the prison singing in his strong, resonant voice the favourite Catholic hymn, " Salve Regina," the concluding words of one verse being, " Pray for the sinner, pray for me." He varied this occasionally with Balfe's " The Memory of the Past."

Not the least saddening sight it has been my lot to behold was provided on the morning of Kelly's execution outside Kilmainham Gaol. Kneeling in the roadway were his poor father and mother. They had taken up their positions in the very early hours of the morning, and had prayed incessantly and most earnestly for the spirit of the boy they were so soon to lose. As the fatal moment grew nearer and nearer the faster and louder they poured forth their words of supplication. When at last the black flag was run up from one of the turrets of the grey, frowning building, to announce the vindication of justice, the father groaned piteously and the mother uttered a piercing shriek as they both fell forward upon their faces, still sobbing vehement prayers. The vast concourse of people who witnessed the painful scene raised their hats in deference to the awful happening, and partly in respect to the poignant grief of the suffering innocent, and silently passed away, leaving the stricken parents still absorbed in their sorrow.

Before leaving the subject of the trials of Kelly, I should like to draw attention to something that struck me during the conduct of the case, as forcibly demonstrating the danger of enforcing academic arguments in the prosecution of criminal charges. The particular instance I refer to happened in this way. During the second trial the Attorney-General found it advisable to explain away some apparent discrepancies between the testimony given by some of the informers and that of the independent witnesses. The fully obvious necessity for some action of the sort was provided by the fact that Mr. Dennis B. Sullivan had tightly grasped, and made forcible use of, the tiniest contradictions that could be discovered in the evidence against his client. Accordingly Mr. Porter urged that the very existence of these slight variations lent verisimilitude to the probability of the story as a whole. He contended that they were convincing as going to show that the informers had had no opportunity of "comparing notes"; that the independent persons who had been called had not agreed upon a fixed story, and that the police were acting with characteristic fairness, and had made no effort to reconcile contradictory items. The slight differences that existed must, in fact, be taken as proof of the absence of special preparation, and the pertinacity with which the variations were insisted upon was sufficient verification of honesty and might be well accounted for by lapse of time since the occurrences. Very well! On the occasion of the third trial Mr. Sullivan put forward an *alibi* on behalf of his client, and produced a witness to prove it, who had not been seen or heard of in the case before. The whole weight of the *alibi* rested upon this man's word with whatever tiny shreds of corroboration that could be found. Under cross-examination the confirmatory testimony crumbled up very considerably.

Thereupon Mr. Sullivan was seen at his best. Not only did he use every argument the Attorney-General had employed to bolster up the discrepancies in *his* evidence, during the second trial, but he requisitioned and adopted whole phrases from the learned law officer. It was a masterly exposition of legal tactics, as well as splendid argument, and had it not been for the unanswerable character of the case for the other side it might have been effective. It was this and his final outburst of pure eloquence that caused Mr. Justice O'Brien to express his appreciation in the language I have quoted, and I shall never forget the delight and enthusiasm of Mr. A. M. Sullivan, M.P., when he discovered that I had anticipated the learned judge by a couple of hours and had written precisely the same words about his younger brother in the course of a descriptive report for evening papers I was responsible for.

CHAPTER XVII

NEGLECT OF A USEFUL PUBLIC SERVANT

PASSING through Dublin on my way to the West Coast, where I had some private concerns, in 1898, I called on John Mallon, at the Lower Castle Yard, as was my usual custom on such occasions. I introduced to him Mr. Harry Tapp, a mining engineer, who was travelling with me. In the course of conversation Mallon said to Mr. Tapp: "You may take it from me, sir, that your friend here knows more about the inner story of the Invincible conspiracy than any man living, who was not actually connected with it, except myself." Turning to me he added: "There is certainly one thing you don't know. That is the name of the first person who gave me any clue to the identity of the men who perpetrated the Phœnix Park murders." I ventured the confident declaration that I could mention the name in three tries. Mallon hastily interrupted me with, "Well! it's no use you guessing, for I shall not tell you if you do hit the mark." "At all events," I said, "I know it was someone who came to you on the night of the tragedy, or on the following morning, and that he was engaged in business at an establishment not very far from the Nelson Pillar. I know, also, that he did not get either of the rewards offered by Lord Spencer in his proclamation of May 9th, 1882, one of which was £10,000 for information, within three months,

that would lead to the conviction of the murderers, and the other £1,000 for 'such private information' as would bring about the same result. And he did not require the free pardon that was offered to any person concerned in or privy to the murders, not being one of the actual perpetrators. Indeed, it was a curious thing, seeing the extraordinary amount of 'informing' that took place afterwards, that neither of the tempting money offers brought you the required evidence. I know this, further, that the man we are referring to received altogether £90 from the authorities, that the first £40 was for what were called 'expenses,' and his conscience thumped him so hard lest he should be under suspicion of his better nature that he was accepting 'blood-money,' that he insisted upon giving an 'I.O.U.' for the £50 he received subsequently." "You're perfectly right," said Mallon, "but I don't know how the dickens you came by the facts."

I did not think it necessary to enlighten him, although, as a fact, it was one of the confidences he had himself reposed in me, years before, when I had been discussing with him the rewards of quite a number of informers of the class known in detective circles in this country as police "narks."

On this point I should like to say that there have been many instances of shabbiness on the part of the higher authorities in regard to the welfare of the people who have helped them. In far too many cases has the "looking after" of these people been left to the policeman in his individual capacity. As I have indicated elsewhere, the man whose assistance led to the arrest of James Stephens, when he was in hiding at Sandymount, got no reward beyond being "looked after" by the police, who also managed to obtain for him a lift up in his business. It is just possible, however, that was all he cared to accept, or,

on the other hand, it may have been all the Executive considered Stephens was really worth at the time, although they offered £1,000 for him after his escape from Richmond Bridewell.

A young fellow who was an official in the Land League, and, at the same time, was in the regular pay of Exchange Court and received a fixed weekly wage from the latter source, his special function being to provide details as to meetings that were about to be held, the speakers who had arranged to attend them, as well as any other items of interest he could gather from correspondence that came within the cast of his eye, or from scraps of conversation and the comings and goings of League leaders, had to be provided with a job when the organization was broken up. I don't believe that even the other Dublin detectives knew that it was Mallon who found the situation for him. All the same, he is now in a prosperous commercial line and still has the reputation of a stalwart Irish National Leaguer.

The woman who notified the police as to the identity of Colonel Kelly, the American Fenian Centre, when he was detained in Manchester merely as a vagrant, for they did not know who he really was—the same woman who subsequently gave the most positive and explicit information of the intention to blow up Clerkenwell Prison and the exact methods that were to be employed—was, in my opinion, very much neglected in after life. For it *was* a woman who gave those two sets of notices to the authorities which ought to have frustrated the killing of Sergeant Brett and the resultant hanging of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien in Manchester, and the devastating, fatal explosion at Clerkenwell, had the Home Office handled them with the slightest spark of intelligence. I do not think I should have mentioned this detail or have gone any further

than to state that it was a person in a small way of business in Dublin, although I am fully aware of her personality and all the circumstances, but for the fact that Sir Robert Anderson lays great stress in his book upon all the assistance *he* got from her and the wonderful things *he* did, or attempted to do, in consequence of it, and I wish to point out that, if there is anything in his claims, surely he is the person who ought to have seen that she did not fall by the way. However, I have it on the authority of Mallon, for what it is worth, that Sir Robert, probably to lend verisimilitude to the record of his important efforts, has exaggerated somewhat in relation to the part he took. Sir Robert says :

> " I despatched the telegrams which the disaster of the day rendered famous, warning both the Home Office and the Manchester authorities that special precautions were necessary in the case of the Fenian prisoners. The warning was neglected, and the prisoners were rescued at the cost of a police officer's life."

Mallon's marginal note to that statement is in the following words :

> " He had nothing to do with this. It was old Ryan."

Again, in a foot-note, Sir Robert writes :

> " In this class was our informant—a person whose only connection with Fenianism was help given, through kindness of heart, to some of the ' boys ' whom the police were searching for. In later years I occasionally received information from the same individual, and it was always designed to prevent the commission of crime."

The comment that Mallon has provided me with against that passage is:

"She did not give him the information."

As a fact this woman first came into touch with the police by writing to Dan Ryan, who threw the communication over to Mallon with the familiar expression: "John avick, you'd better look into that." Mallon saw the woman, got from her the information about the two "vagrants" in Manchester, Colonel Kelly and Captain Deasy, and brought it to Ryan, who promptly despatched it by wire to both Manchester and London.

The intimation that it was intended to cause an explosion outside Clerkenwell Prison, together with the signal that was to be given, and, indeed, the whole paraphernalia as it was actually accomplished, was given by this woman to Mallon standing outside the office of the old *Saunder's News Letter*, in Dame Street. In after years her little business petered out, bit by bit, and she fell upon very grey times, and the only assistance she got was an occasional gift of a few shillings from Mallon and from other detective officers who had come to know her through him when his duties had increased and it was necessary for him to delegate some of them to others. Eventually matters went to the dogs altogether, and the poor old soul was desirous of emigrating to America. That was in the nineties, when Mr. John Morley, now Lord Morley, was Chief Secretary. Mallon went to him and put the case before him. Mr. Morley did not see what he could do, for he knew of no funds that were available for such a purpose. Mallon suggested that he could easily get a "draw" out of the Secret Service Fund if he were agreeable, and Mr. Morley accordingly provided the necessary means from that source to send this broken-down old creature to the United

States. It was not necessary to enlarge the annual vote of £50,000, however; for the generosity and the gratitude of the Executive to this useful public servant, whose services are extolled by Sir Robert Anderson, only took the form of a miserable grant of £20—or £30, maybe; I am not certain to a pound or two at this distance of time, although I know it was not more than the latter amount.

It seems a little hard that those who assist the powers of law and order with the one and only object of preventing crime should be so inadequately considered; while brutal informers of the Carey type, having carried their nefarious designs to the bitterest ends, and merely possessed with the hope of saving their own worthless necks by the wholesale sacrifice of their unhappy dupes, should be treated with lavish care. Not only was that prince of ruffians, Carey, amply provided for, but money was poured out like water to house and feed and clothe and protect his wife and family for months before they were finally sent abroad. Mrs. Carey and the children were kept in lodgings near Dalston Station for many weeks, and the special duty of looking after them and providing for their creature comforts was entrusted to Sergeant Patrick Macintyre, of Scotland Yard. So excellently well found were they that Mrs. Carey could afford to present her guardian with James' gold watch-chain as a kind of souvenir and a slight recognition of his kindly ministrations. Macintyre was very proud of that albert. It became one of the attractions of the "bar" he took in the Borough after he left the police, until one day he drew the attention of a stranger to it, and the latter displayed such convincing interest that the ex-policeman allowed him to take it into his own hands "just so that he could say he had held James Carey's watch-guard." Like a flash the man vanished

through the door as soon as he got his claws on the trinket, and there was a great hullabaloo. Macintyre eventually got it back again, but he had to pay a pawnbroker's claims, and he was rather more chary afterwards about parading his precious mementoes.

Not only did the authorities provide Carey with money on parting company with him—which, by the way, enabled him to get drunk and throw away his life through his braggadocio—but they armed him with a Service revolver and a number of cartridges before finally losing sight of him. The day he left Ireland, Mallon fetched him away from Kilmainham Gaol and brought him to the Lower Castle Yard in a four-wheeled cab. Coming along the quay the officer handed him a six-chambered revolver and told him to put it in his pocket as he might find it useful for his own protection when at last the police washed their hands of him. He asked if it was loaded. Mallon assured him that it was. "Then what's to prevent me shooting you stone dead, John Mallon, and getting revenge for all the trouble you have brought upon me?" hissed the scoundrel. "Only this," replied the ever-ready detective, "that, knowing the sort of villain you are, James, I took the precaution of loading it with blank cartridges. Besides, I have my finger on the trigger of a revolver myself," declared Mallon, as he cocked up the pocket of his dust-coat. As a matter of simple truth the weapon was fully loaded with ball ammunition, but the explanation seemed to satisfy Carey. With a sickly smile and with the assurance, "Faith! I was only joking with you," he put the firearm in his pocket. Then he wanted to know where he was going and where his wife and family were staying. Mallon declined to give him any information beyond this: that he was going abroad, the actual place had not yet been decided upon, nor had the boat he would sail in been

selected up to that moment, and he would meet his wife and children on board the steamer.

Carey's appearance at this time was very different to that he had presented in the witness-chair. He was clean-shaven, and his kinky hair was cut short and parted at the side instead of being divided down the centre as of old. He was a forbidding, objectionable-looking person, with repulsively low forehead, on which the hair grew almost down to his eyebrows, and large, besotted, red nose. The removal of moustache and beard had disclosed a peculiarly animal mouth that added to the sinister, cut-throat suggestiveness of the whole. Indeed, even his spouse might well have received a shock if she had never seen her James before without his hirsute appendages. He was not relying upon his changed appearance, however, when he stubbornly declared, with an oath, that he would not go away—he would stay in Dublin and face the matter out and justify himself. He had evidently persuaded himself that he was a much injured individual—a kind of modern martyr—who had been forced, much against his better nature, into reprisals against a host of disloyal, dishonest blackguards who had wantonly sought to put his neck in a halter.

"No! he'd be —— if he'd go away." "Very well, James," said Mallon, "you can go to blazes out of that and take care of yourself as long as you can, but you'd better go straight away and buy some proper cartridges for the revolver you have." As he said this, Mallon caused the cab to be pulled up half-way down Parliament Street, and flung open the door. Carey put his foot on the step, as though to take the detective at his word. The sudden stoppage of the vehicle caused a couple of passers-by to stand and gaze curiously at the occupants. As soon as James Carey caught sight of them he fell back into

the cab and crouched down on the seat beside Mallon and begged of him, "for God's sake!" to drive on. Carey gave no further trouble after that, and he was shipped off to South Africa, as all the world knows, in due course.

I notice in his interesting work, "Recollections of Troubled Times in Irish Politics," Mr. T. D. Sullivan deals at some little length with Carey, and the tone he adopts rather savours of the apologist. I have a copy of the venerable poet's book which has several annotations by John Mallon, and for his benefit in the preparation of any further editions I take leave to present them. Mr. Sullivan says: "While in prison Carey was induced to turn 'Queen's evidence,'" and against that passage Mallon writes:

> "No inducement was held out to him. I loathed and shunned him."

The author goes on to suggest that Carey was "led," etc., by "intimations and suggestions that his services" "would be acceptable," "in which event his life would be spared," etc., etc.

Mallon's comment upon all that is:

> "Not true. One man, and that man not a police officer, agreed to listen to Carey, his object being vindictive, to damage the Nat. Cor. of Dublin, of which C—— was a member."

The "man, not a police officer," referred to was probably an eminent lawyer, and Mr. Sullivan will have little difficulty in placing him.

Finally, in a foot-note, Mr. Sullivan has penned these words:

> "It has often been said for unfortunate Carey by persons of some knowledge in these matters that he

could have done 'more harm' had he been so disposed, and that, in fact, he kept back from the authorities much they would have been glad to learn. And the statement is probably true."

If Mr. Sullivan refers to Carey's refusal to identify Mrs. Frank Byrne as the person who took over the transfixion knives, very likely he is right, but he seems to go further than this, and so I give what Mallon says on the matter:

"No foundation for this. Carey told all he knew, and did not minimise. He would have sworn that the Land League financed the Invincibles if permitted. Carey was not trusted by his comrades, and was only asked to become an Invincible after J—— L—— had refused."

CHAPTER XVIII

STRETCHING THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT

THE first time I got into intimate touch with Mallon was on the Tuesday night following the Phœnix Park murders. It was midnight, and I was taking a last look round for any stray item that might have cropped up for the enlightenment of the British public. On that occasion the policeman made very deliberate use of me. I did not know that he was doing so at the time, or the result might have been different. However, all's well that ends well, and the story is well worth the telling. I found Mallon still attending to his duties at Exchange Court. He told me that he knew the man who drove the assassins' car, and he gave me a description of him and of the car itself and the pony that drew it. He also told me where the man had his stables, and gave me a lot more details. Eventually he said he had the man detained inside at that moment, but that he had not charged him yet, and he offered to let me see him. I promised I would make no sign nor take too much notice of the jarvey, and he then brought me to an inner room, where I saw Michael Kavanagh sitting beside the fire. Of course, I did not know the fellow's name at that time. Then, as I was leaving, Mallon said I might make whatever use I liked of the information he had given me, but I must, under no circumstances, disclose the fact that he was my informant.

In fact, he said, if I wrote the story and it got back to Dublin, he would be pestered by every reporter in the city, and he would probably deny all knowledge of the statements and suggest that I must have been dreaming. That was not a very bright prospect, but the item was too good to let rip, so I took my courage in both hands, wrote the tale as I had received it, and put it on the wires for evening papers shortly after six o'clock in the morning. Sure enough, it got telegraphed back to Dublin, and exactly what Mallon had foreshadowed happened. He promptly repudiated me and the story, and I was unable to give the name of the person from whom I had got the details. I was jeered at in the press and referred to as a sensation-monger, and all that sort of thing. I think it was the fact that I did not "give him away" that favourably impressed Mallon towards me in those early days. On the Friday, when the thing was blowing over a bit—matters of interest moved rapidly in those days—I went to Mallon and asked him what it all meant. I found him frankness itself. He said he had been stretching the Habeas Corpus Act with a view of capturing an informer. He had not succeeded yet, but he still hoped. He explained the scheme in this wise. He had detained the carman there without charging him. He knew he had the right man, and he had no doubt that the other conspirators of the Park tragedy were also fully alive to the fact that he had got him. What he was gambling on was that these fellows, being as artful as a cart-load of monkeys, would notice that he had secured Kavanagh, and they would be looking out for him to come before the magistrate. When Mallon did not bring him before a magistrate within twenty-four hours, as he was bound to do under the Habeas Corpus Act, he wanted the others to come to the only natural conclusion there was, if he were legitimately

detained, that he must have turned informer. Then the wily policeman speculated that the conspirators who were not the actual murderers would tumble over themselves and each other to "get first" to give up all they knew and save their necks. In the meantime he could find no one to identify Kavanagh, and that fact must have leaked out in some way, for the ruse, clever and daring as it was, failed. Of course, my "car story," as it was called, was thoroughly justified when at last, in the following January, Kavanagh was put in the witness-chair and explained that he had been detained for the best part of three days covering the time I had spoken to, but I had undergone a terrible amount of suspicion in the meantime. It was on that Friday evening, standing at the corner of Exchange Court, that Mallon told me he was certain he knew most of the principals involved in the Park horror, and his only trouble was the identification. He must have an informer, he said, and he then forecast for me the Star Chamber clause that he said would be introduced into the Coercion Act—and that had not been introduced up to then—and assured me that the men he suspected would be "put on the rack," if necessary, but they should divulge enough to enable him to make the murderers amenable.

That was the time that he told me what had transpired between himself and Mr. Parnell in Kilmainham Gaol just before the release of the Irish leader under the Kilmainham Treaty. Parnell sent for him, and said he supposed Mallon would be thinking about giving him police protection as soon as he came out, and the circumstances of his release came to be known. Mallon said he did not know if it would be necessary, and Parnell then said: "But suppose they should make me Chief Secretary, Mallon; what then?" "Then, by gob," enthusiastically declared Mallon, "I'll look after you fine and very glad I'll be to

do it," and I believe he spoke the truth. I have often wondered whether Mr. Parnell was only joking, or whether there had been anything in the negotiations to lead him to believe that Gladstone would offer him the Chief Secretaryship during the time that the compact was being carried out, and who shall now say? Mallon and I frequently discussed the point in later years, and the astute old policeman has often shaken his head and expressed the conviction that the suggestion was no mere idle fancy on the part of the Irish leader. But the terrible blow of the 6th of May wiped away the possibility of any such consummation for ever.

Another remarkable statement made to me by Mallon was connected with the execution of Joseph Brady. We were stopping together at the Newry Hotel, as nearly as possible a quarter of a century after that event. After dinner one evening the staid old justice of the peace, as he is now, although he seldom appears on the bench unless he takes it in his head that leniency may be at a slight discount, turned to me rather abruptly and said: "Do you remember meeting me outside Kilmainham Prison the day after Joe Brady was hanged?" "I do well," said I. "What makes you remember it?" he asked, and I answered that it was because I thought he was curt, if not rude to me on the occasion, and, as I knew of nothing in our relations to justify it, I was naturally a little hurt. I was outside the gates of the gaol and I saw Mallon come out and go towards a waiting car. Of course, I approached him, but he just shouted to me, before I could get nearer than within twenty yards of him: "Don't speak to me!" jumped on the car and was away in a moment. I remembered the strange incident as well as though it had only been the day before. "Did you notice that I had a parcel with me tied up in something white?" he now asked. "I

did," I said. "Well, it was Joseph Brady's head I had in a table napkin, and I was taking it over to the Royal College of Surgeons to be left for Dr. Carté, and that is the reason I did not want you to speak to me or to detain me."

Shortly after that conversation with Mallon I wrote to Mr. George Wyndham, who was Chief Secretary at the time, and asked if he could let me have any report as to the condition of the brain, as I thought, in view of the fine leonine head of the young bravo on the one hand and the peculiar ferocity of the crime on the other, the surgical examination might have disclosed some interesting phenomena, but Mr. Wyndham replied through his secretary that he knew nothing about the matter. Thinking that there was possibly some doubt as to the precise propriety in removing the head of an executed convict from the prison in which he had paid the last penalty, and that probably I should have some difficulty in gleaning instructive particulars, I decided to let the matter drop.

Speaking about the Clerkenwell explosion, Mallon mentioned that there were a great many people who were doubtful as to whether Barrett, who was hanged in connection with it, should have suffered the extreme penalty. Barrett certainly did not cause the actual explosion, for he was away in Glasgow at the time, but he was the man who planned the whole thing, and he was mainly responsible for the act of devastation. Mallon declares that he knows who the man was who actually fired the fuse, and he confided the information to me. He had a peculiar patronymic, and his front name began with a "Q." He became a great friend of Frank Byrne when he was secretary to the Irish Parliamentary party, and used frequently to visit him in his office at St. Stephen's Chambers. There was a difficulty about his identification, and he was never

put on his trial, but the police did not lose sight of him for a number of years.

Mallon tells an interesting story which goes to illustrate the extraordinary mass of contradictions there is to be found in the bosoms of some of Ireland's wrong-doers. Early one morning, after Kavanagh had turned Queen's evidence, Mallon took the informer out of prison, put him in a trap, and drove him over the whole route he had taken on the day of the murders, from the time he left his stables in the morning until he returned to them in the evening. The object of this was to test him as thoroughly as possible, to piece his statement together in sequential order, and to gather material for picking up whatever tiny threads of corroboration there might be available. When at last he got out into the country at the further end of the Phœnix Park, Mallon pulled up at Chapelizod to give the fellow some breakfast. Kavanagh determined to improve the shining hour, and said he thought he would like a steak. When he got well into it, his custodian reminded him that it was a Friday. "Glory be to God!" exclaimed the ruffian, dropping knife and fork and throwing up his hands. "Is it myself that would be eating meat on a fast-day?" "What's that?" said Mallon. "You'd be participating in the brutal murder of two innocent men, and then you'd pretend to be sticking at eating meat on a Friday? Get on with your meal, you blackguard."

And Kavanagh "got on" with his breakfast to the finish.

CHAPTER XIX

SIR ROBERT ANDERSON ANSWERED

NOT the least severe critic of the Dublin Metropolitan Police was John Mallon. He was a spectator of the Amnesty riot in the Phœnix Park on August 6th, 1871, which Mr. T. D. Sullivan, probably with truth, describes as a "police-made riot," and I find the following amongst notes he has given me. "The police were to blame for this. Their arrangements were bad. The police party was too, and the two senior officers in charge were drunk and had no orders."

Writing later on, in reference to the batonings I have referred to as having witnessed in Sackville Street, Mallon says: "The D. M. P. behaved badly and used unnecessary violence in Sackville Street the night John Dillon was arrested. Twenty men, with a revolver each, left a pub. in Dorset Street to shoot the police, and were prevented by a man who was afterwards on the Invincible committee."

I am induced to mention these things mainly for the reason that I am anxious to dispel the slightest suggestion that I have exaggerated in dealing with these matters.

Nor is Mallon less frank in regard to the doings of those whom it has been his duty to keep an official eye upon. For instance, he would never lend his countenance to the efforts that were made in certain official circles to represent

the old Fenian movement as a murder conspiracy. Throughout his confidences to me he has always represented to me that although the basis of Fenianism was that of a secret society, which in itself was abhorrent to him as a conscientious Catholic, the association, as a whole, acted upon the principle that they were possessed of legitimate belligerent rights. True, they conceived that it was within their province to "remove" spies and those of the Brotherhood who were known to be false to their oaths and traitors to the cause, but they did not sanction murder in the ordinary sense or personal violence towards officials or individuals outside their own organization. On this point Mallon writes to me as follows:

"The F. B." (Fenian Brotherhood), "being a military organization, treated informers as traitors, but they never sanctioned indiscriminate murder."

He also says, and the knowledge of the fact may still awake qualms of conscience in the bosoms of two or three of the Fenians of that day who are still with us, that:

"In February, 1866, a man who was suspected of having given information about concealed arms was shot on canal banks at Phibsboro. He lived for a few hours in the Mater Hospital, but never disclosed the name of the assassin. This was the first Fenian murder, *and the victim was innocent.*" (The italics are mine.)

I have some further notes that may greatly interest Sir Robert Anderson, and, in any case, they go to show how very difficult it is to discriminate between the genuine, meanful Irish conspiracy and the meritricious dodges of the quick-wits who batten on the ready credulity of the amateurs who are out after personal glory and are ever ready to absorb, and pay for special knowledge of, fancy pot-house plots, so long as they are imparted with a sufficiency of thick, guttural accent and the slouch hat is

shabby and the eye blood-shot enough—details that are easily and satisfactorily acquired by artists of this kidney. I want it to be clearly understood that I have no knowledge of the special circumstances herein set out. I give them because Mallon seems to know all about them, because I believe that Sir Robert Anderson, amongst others, has frequently been deceived, and because my principal object in writing this book is to make things plain, in so far as I am able, and to dispel fallacies.

On page 90 of his book Sir Robert Anderson puts before the world with all solemnity a statement that the "Fenian organization in London was governed by a triumvirate, and one of the three was in my pay," and he goes on to say that he communicated the result of one of the secret meetings, held the night before, to Sir William Harcourt and Sir Adolphus Liddell, and the same afternoon the information appeared in an evening paper, Sir William having given the story to a certain Irish member, who was supposed to be in the secrets of the conspiracy, because he "wanted to take a rise out of him." Mallon's marginal comment on that is: "Lysaght, Finnigan and two others humbugged Anderson."

On page 126 of "Side Lights on the Home Rule Movement," Sir Robert writes: "Another plot, the full history of which I will not at present disclose, was still more horrible. It included another attempt upon the House of Commons, but it was specially aimed at Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations in Westminster Abbey in 1887." And the learned gentleman adds to this in a footnote: "The credit of baffling and entirely preventing the execution of that plot belongs to Mr. James Monro, C.B., at that time Assistant-Commissioner of Police at Scotland Yard." And he adds, on page 132, when dealing with "The Jubilee Plot," as he calls it, and referring to the Parliamentary

Committee appointed with a view to amend the regulations for the admission of strangers to the House of Commons: "The evidence in that inquiry disclosed that a leading Fenian, named F. F. Millen, came to Europe with a number of subordinate agents to carry out a fiendish scheme of dynamite outrages, and that one at least of the Parnellite members was in close touch with these men, though it was not averred that he was privy to their designs."

Mallon's comment on the first passage I have quoted is this: "Millen humbugged them."

Half-way down page 128 of his work, the same author commits himself to the following: "Edward Bell, the only member of the gang who crossed the Channel, was arrested, and though his conviction was assured, the discovery that the 'prize ring' rules had not been observed led to an abandonment of the prosecution." I have no knowledge of what Sir Robert means by the 'prize ring' rules in this connection, but possibly Mallon's evidence on the matter may help in the elucidation, and I commend it, for what it is worth, to Sir Robert and the authorities. Mallon writes: "This was a *gosling* plot that failed."

Perhaps the most curious of the memoranda for which I am indebted to Mallon is one that sets me thinking deeply. Dealing with the Clan-na-Gael of America, Sir Robert Anderson asserts that it was "this organization which despatched Gallagher and his confederates, who were convicted and received life sentences in May, 1883, and Mackay Lomasney, who was blown to pieces in attempting to wreck London Bridge on December 13, 1884—the anniversary of the Clerkenwell explosion of 1867." Mallon writes, in reference to this "Poor Mackay!" Why "poor Mackay," unless this was another "gosling" plot intended to cover someone with reflected glory in the discovery, and the actual explosion was an unforeseen

accident that had not been counted upon? This reflection appeals to me with all the more force, for the reason that I and a brother journalist, who at the present time occupies an almost unique position in the business and is one of the most successful of our modern newspaper men, together received the confession of a policeman who had actually "planted the apples" on one of the alleged dynamitards at the moment of arresting him. That is to say, this officer of the law assured us that, acting on instructions from a superior official, he had, at the moment of arresting a man who was believed to be a dynamite conspirator, put into his pocket a couple of bombs, so that he should be "taken red-handed," and there should be no mistake about his conviction—which conviction most assuredly followed. However, as I have said, I give these statements of Mallon's for what they are worth, but with this addendum, that, knowing the wonderful sources of information at the command of Mallon, and the scrupulous regard he has for accuracy in such matters, I fully and frankly accept the notes to which I have made reference.

Here is an incident that goes a long way to emphasize what I have written as to Mallon's views with regard to the Fenian organization, and I give it in the actual words in which it was handed to me on Mallon's behalf.

"Mallon had occasion in the course of his investigation of the Phœnix Park murders to interrogate a man who had been a prominent Fenian. This man in reply to a question by Mr. Mallon, indignantly said: 'I admit I was a Fenian, but no Fenian was ever a murderer or countenanced murder. I'll tell you, Mr. Mallon, all I know about the Park murders, and it is very short. Some time ago a man came to my house at night and hinted at something like what occurred subsequently; I ordered him out of the

house, and if he had not gone I would have kicked him out!' Mallon's reply to this outburst, which he believed to be true, was: 'I believe every word you have said, Mr. ——' (mentioning the man's name), 'and having honestly expressed this belief, I ask you to do this for me.' 'What is it?' said his companion. 'You have not mentioned the name of the man who came to your house that night to get you entangled in this conspiracy, but I think I know who it was and where he is.' 'Where is he?' asked the other. Mallon replied: 'In France at present; and I ask you now to accompany me to France, and if I point out the man I believe you refer to, just say am I right or not.' 'I will go with you to France,' was the reply. It was this episode that found Mallon in Havre, and, as subsequent events turned out, he was right in his surmise as to the identity of the individual who tried to get a prominent Fenian leader to join a murder conspiracy, but failed to do so."

I have very good reason for believing that the man who was identified in Havre at that time was one J. J. Walsh, who managed to get safely away to America, and has never since been seen in the British Isles. Frankly, I do not know who the old Fenian who went over to Havre with Mallon was, although I have a suspicion that it was the same man whom Mallon mentions when he says that James Carey was only asked to join the committee of the Invincibles after "J—— L——" had refused.

A man who was very much worried when there was anything like a "gosling" plot in the wind was the late Mr. James O'Connor, M.P. for one of the divisions of Wicklow, although why he should have been singled out by police "narks" and those whom he himself described as *agents provocateurs* it is difficult to understand, for in his latter life, at all events, he enjoyed the affectionate

regard of all who came into contact with him, and none who knew him would ever mistake him for a man likely or capable of taking seriously a murder or a dynamite conspiracy. Some years ago Mr. O'Connor himself wrote me an article upon this very matter, and asked the question whether Parliament ought not to inquire into the allegations. In that article he gave a long account of how a woman known as "Mrs. Tyler," but in whom he believed he recognized the wife of a high Scotland Yard official, visited Dublin and attempted to inveigle him and others into a "physical force" campaign, and he also gave graphic details of similar efforts that were made by a man named Hayes. Now Hayes I knew personally, and knew to be in the pay of Scotland Yard or someone connected with it. But what I want to point out in this connection and the parallel I am anxious to draw has to do with Mallon's detestation of this form of police procedure, and the easy and the natural way in which those who are pitchforked, as it were, into the service fall victims to the subtle scoundrels who live upon the loathsome duplicity it involves. Shortly after the Phœnix Park murders "Red Jim" McDermott, whose proceedings and connections are now notorious, turned up in Dublin. James O'Connor had known him first in 1861, and knew that he had served in the Papal army. The deceased Member of Parliament in the article he wrote me speaks of McDermott appearing at the office of the newspaper at which he was then engaged, *United Ireland*, but he had not the slightest suspicion as to the nature of his vile mission. He seems to have kept Mr. O'Connor in the dark as to his proceedings. This was not altogether "Red Jim's" fault, however, and is more likely due to the fact that he was not allowed sufficient time to develop his schemes in the case of Mr. O'Connor. It happened one day that McDermott picked

the late pressman up on an "outside car," and wherever they were bound for eventually, he found it convenient to drive through the Lower Castle Yard. On the following morning Mallon sent a message to the then member for Wicklow to the effect that he would like a word with him the next time he was passing. In due course Mr. O'Connor arrived and Mallon asked him did he know who he was driving about Dublin with. He said he did, well. He had known him since the early sixties. "Well, would you be surprised to hear that he is letting on to be a great Fenian, that he is in the pay of ——" (mentioning the name of one of the ornamental adjuncts of the police system in Ireland at the time), "that when he drove you through the yard yesterday Mr. —— was at that window over there by arrangement with 'Red Jim,' and that the whole business was arranged so that the scoundrel could demonstrate to his paymaster the class of fellows he was mixing with and the wonderful influence he could exercise over them?"

It was shortly after that conversation that questions were asked in Parliament about this particular *agent provocateur*, and "Red Jim" McDermott made himself scarce, and placed a good deal of Mother Earth between his carcase and the boots of his erstwhile companions in Dublin.

CHAPTER XX

THE IMPRESSIVE FAITH OF MR. FORSTER

BY no means the least of the difficulties that have to be faced by those responsible for law and order and security for life and property in Ireland is that of inducing high-placed officials to believe that there is danger personal to them when the ramifications of some dastardly plot have been unearthed. The life of Mr. Thomas Burke was in constant jeopardy for years, but he steadfastly declined to credit the warnings that reached him. For years, rightly or wrongly, it had been the popular belief in Ireland that Mr. Burke, as permanent Under Secretary to the Lords Lieutenant, was far more responsible for the Executive Government of the country than all the Viceroys and all the Chief Secretaries and all the British Cabinets, for that matter, put together. Burke, it was generally accepted and asserted amongst intelligent Irishmen, was the Government of Ireland—Burke was the form of control, known as "Dublin Castle," that they bitterly resented; just as one of his predecessors in the early sixties was said to have exercised a kind of dictatorship in the Sister Isle. That was Colonel Larcom. Colonel Larcom was undoubtedly a charming man in social life, and had been brought up in the Royal Engineers, but he had absolutely no capacity whatever for the righteous government of communities. He had no initiative and never attempted to go below the surface of things. He had no knowledge

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—neither did he make the slightest effort to cultivate it—of the trend of popular feeling and sentiment. He just accepted the reports submitted to him and blindly acted upon them. That was the reason for the public gibe. Even William Whiteside, who was Attorney-General when he said it (and afterwards Lord Chief Justice), openly declared that "Larcom and the police is the Government of Ireland." Mr. Thomas Burke was thought to occupy an even more autocratic position, for he was credited with acting upon his own initiative and without the slightest guidance from the police. This was the deliberate opinion of well-informed and thinking people. I remember a conversation I once had with an Irish Member of Parliament, who, if not altogether a brilliant statesman, was, without doubt, one of the most sincere and admirable gentlemen in the House of Commons—the late Mr. William Corbett. I was dining with him at his club in Hanover Square on the Saturday evening preceding the Phœnix Park tragedy, and there came to us and joined in the conversation, Mr. Garrett Byrne, another of the Nationalist Members of Parliament. Not unnaturally our gossip turned upon the Government of Ireland. The principal leaders of the Irish people were in prison without trial and without the formulation of any sort of charge against them. Matters were drifting from bad to worse, as they ever do when the victims of injustice lose their heads and tyranny of power is substituted for amelioration; when right and equity are ridiculed as weaknesses and heartless repression in the thinnest of disguises is paraded in the garb of a necessary evil. Mr. Corbett and Mr. Burke had been college chums. One had become a representative of the people, the other an officer of their task-masters.

There was nothing more certain than that our talk should have pursued the path of British rule in Ireland and the

enormities that were shadowing the country and the countrymen of my friend. Mr. Corbett expressed the firm conviction that Mr. Burke, and he alone, was responsible for the want of tact that stamped the control of Executive policy. It was his opinion that the temporary occupants of the Viceregal throne and the holder of the secretarial portfolio were at the mercy of the prejudices and forceful advice of permanent autocracy as represented by the Under Secretary. No matter how beneficent the personal leanings and the intentions of the Ministers appointed in England, the influence and the powers of persuasion of Mr. Burke were such that the others counted for nothing after the first few weeks of office. So long as this was so changes of Government and the coming and going of parties made no appreciable difference. The fixed policy of misrule and coercion would continue to flourish. The Member for Wicklow added that so firmly rooted was this conviction, and so rapidly was it growing, that, in a recent conversation he had had with Mr. Burke, when he had met him casually at a social gathering, he had expressed to him his astonishment that he had so long escaped violence at the hands of some mad-brained and misguided fanatic. Mr. Corbett was by no means alone in the holding of that view, and it seems highly probable that the existence of the danger was well within the knowledge of the permanent Under Secretary himself. He waved off the suggested possibility with a genial smile, and the expression of belief that he was not really worthy so much consideration. That was his habit, although he had been warned of the precipice on the brink of which he stood a dozen times and more.

Mallon had discovered numerous plots and preparations for his " removal " and had warned him, but he had treated the matter lightly. He declined, positively, all proposals as to police protection, and on one occasion, when he

discovered that he was receiving the attentions and the undemonstrative escort of two plain-clothes policemen, he summoned the Chief of the Detective Department before him and, mild-mannered man that he was, stamped his foot in the vehemence of his command that the protection and the shadowing should be discontinued. Only a few days before his assassination, and as a last resource, Mallon went to him and begged of him to carry a revolver as some slight means of protection in case of emergency. Almost sternly he put the officer to silence. "I don't believe they will do it, Mallon," he said. "But if they do want my poor life, as the best testimony and appreciation they can offer to the many years I have devoted, to the best of the lights and intelligence that God has given me, to the interests of my country—well, let them have it. I will not carry arms to protect myself against my own countrymen, to whom, rather, I feel that I am entitled to look for protection." There, indeed, was a wonderful corroboration, were it necessary, of the perfect sense of rectitude which dictated his official acts, but it was amazing as an exemplification of how this able and high-minded man had missed the trend of popular sentiment.

Mr. W. E. Forster was similarly obsessed with repugnance to accept any statement as to his individual danger. He would not listen to the reports of those whose duty it was to warn him of the risks that beset him from time to time, and the responsibilities and difficulties of the officers bent on protecting him became immense. The attempts on his life, during his term of office as Chief Secretary, were many—indeed, it is doubtful if they have, or ever will, come to light in their entirety. The story of those that were discovered would fill a volume and his hair-breadth escapes go to demonstrate that he must have

borne something very like a charmed life as depicted in the story-books. Many a time he was saved by a ruse resorted to by Mallon, and more than once a most determined and carefully-organized plot broke down at the last moment through some seemingly miraculous or Heaven-sent accident. Shortly before the Phœnix Park murders, and only a few days prior to his resigning office in Mr. Gladstone's administration, Mallon discovered that danger was in the wind, that the murder conspirators were active, that "something" was likely to happen, and that the object of their machinations was Mr. Forster. Almost instinctively he gathered that some sort of attempt would be made upon the life of the right honourable gentleman on the occasion of his leaving Dublin for England. It was impossible for him to notify the Chief Secretary, who would not listen to a word. Any effort to put him on the *qui vive* would assuredly lead to his carrying out his programme without the smallest variation. At the very last moment, therefore, he caused it to be suggested that as the weather was beautifully fair it would be conducive to health to drive to Kingstown instead of joining the train at Westland Row and proceeding there by rail. Mr. Forster's travelling companions and the luggage went to the station and nothing happened—except this, that Brady and Kelly were on the platform and they searched high and low for the Chief Secretary, and Brady actually went the length of entering the specially-engaged saloon carriage. It is beyond the range of possible doubt that had Mr. Forster been there he would have been hacked to pieces before any of his attendants could have raised a finger to help him. These facts transpired at the subsequent trial of Brady, when the informers gave evidence against him, but they did not know, and it was not then suggested, that the *débâcle*, from the assassins'

point of view, was wholly due to the vigilance and foresight of John Mallon. On yet another occasion the murderers had engaged a room on Cork Hill, the windows of which commanded the roadway usually traversed by Mr. Forster's carriage as he proceeded to the Castle. From this window they had carefully and frequently sighted a Winchester repeater with a view of catching the statesman as he passed along reclining amidst his cushions. But on the day fixed for the outrage they got shut out by the crowd and could not obtain access to the house in time to effect their deadly purpose. And again, Carey explained in the witness-chair how elaborate preparations had been made to stab the Chief Secretary on the Quay as he made his way to his office. Carey had himself attended Mass at a chapel by the river-side, so as to be handy, in a natural sort of way, in order to give the signal. There was to have been a general slaughter that day, for there were men there with revolvers whose business it was to account for the escort. Skin-the-Goat, as Fitzharris was called, was present with his four-wheeled cab, and the old grey mare in the shafts, ready to draw across the road and obstruct Mr. Forster's carriage. He was to pull out suddenly and get right in front of the approaching vehicle even at the risk of a collision that might overturn him. He was to separate the carriage from the escort if possible, but at all events his primary duty, in which there must be no flaw, was to bring the Chief Secretary's equipage to a standstill. All was in perfect order and readiness. Along came the escort and the landau at a sharp trot. Carey gave the signal to stand at attention; Brady and Kelly put their hands on their knives, Fagan and Tom Caffery and the Hanlons felt for their revolvers, and Skin-the-Goat gathered up the reins of the grey mare. Suddenly, as by a special interposition of Providence, the horse in another cab that was

proceeding along the quay some distance in advance of the Minister's *cortège*, fell in the middle of the road. The escort saw the accident and, quick as thought, the officer conceived the possibility of obstruction and delay. As luck would have it, he was just in time to turn sharply to the right and take the party over one of the many small bridges that cross the Liffey and which was the last before coming to the more substantial one it was usual to drive over. To reach the latter bridge it would have been necessary to go right into the ambush that had been so carefully prepared, and had the escort proceeded along the direct road another ten yards before noticing the obstruction they would have been too late—it would have been impossible for them to turn round and to avoid the fallen horse. The *pièce de résistance* of that plot was that when Fitzharris succeeded in stopping the Chief Secretary's carriage Brady and Kelly were to attack Mr. Forster with knives from either side of the vehicle—actually entering it if necessary. On another occasion, Mr. Forster escaped through a man named Rolls, who died of heart disease while awaiting trial, failing to give the signal. He was overcome by either remorse or fear.

Within a few days of the abortive plans I have just narrated, information reached Mallon of yet another desperate attempt that was to be made on the life of the Chief Secretary. He realized the impossibility of conveying the warning to Mr. Forster himself, so he reported what he knew to the Chief Commissioner of Police, and then took counsel with the Attorney-General. Each of those gentlemen, knowing the almost fanatical prejudices of the chief officer of State in these matters, declined to be the medium of any direct communication. Eventually it was decided that the proper course to pursue was to approach Mr. Jephson, Mr. Forster's private secretary, on the matter.

Even that gentleman hesitated to break the news to his chief. Finally it was arranged that Mallon was to write a report, couched in the briefest possible language and written in a bold handwriting, so that the material facts would strike the eye at once and convey the information in a flash, as it were, and before the right honourable gentleman could have time to reflect or to object. For all that, Mr. Jephson required the attendance of the detective officer while he presented the report, and then he hurriedly introduced Mallon and placed the report before the Chief Secretary with the remark: "Mr. Mallon, with a document that requires your immediate attention, sir." Mr. Forster glanced at the paper, and at once realizing its import, cast it from him and threw down his glasses with the exclamation: "What is this? How dare you, Jephson? I'll not read it. Take it away!" And then he sank his aged head into his hands and cried aloud: "I am not to die like that!" Repeating the expression in a murmur with all the force of deep religious fervour and absolute conviction that was both pathetic and grandly impressive, "No, no! I am not to die like that!" he bowed his head until the supporting hands rested upon the writing-table. Mr. Jephson and Mallon retired and left him alone, and he never again referred to the matter.

How different, in its fulfilment, was the profession of faith delivered by this rugged old adherent of the Society of Friends to the equally sanguine trust, that was destined to miscarriage, possessed by Mr. Thomas Burke? But I think I have written enough to show that simple credence, even though it prove justified by the generous regard of beneficent Providence, does not relieve the well-informed police from grave anxiety and perturbation in the exercise of their onerous calling.

CHAPTER XXI

A CHARMING INCIDENT

"CHIEF SECRETARIES" are anything but popular in Ireland. Many people over there have grown up in the belief that those adjuncts of Vice-Royalty are an entirely special breed of animal from which all, or nearly all, the attributes of common humanity have been eliminated. The ill-tutored peasantry of the country —the real sufferers when there are hardships to be endured in the land—and the working masses of the villages and small towns absorb with their mothers' milk the sentiment that authority should be regarded with loathing. As they grow up their only recreation is politics, and the opportunity of hearing more than one side is non-existent. To them "the Castle" is a dominating fort and a complete arsenal for the manufacture of plots and schemes and deadly weapons for the subjugation of the Irish people—its laws are alien laws, and everything alien is poisonous to a patriotic Catholic Irishman. The "Chief Secretary," and the others who embody British power, they look upon as a special species of succubus and succuba, with a mission to terrify, exasperate and inflame, with a wicked design leading to ultimate repression and punishment, and an end-all of exploitation and then—total destruction. As late as twenty years ago there were whole tribes, or clans, of people in the west and north-

west of Ireland who had never heard of Gladstone or Bright, and to whom the name of O'Connell only conjured up a misty sort of fable about Catholic Emancipation which they could never understand sufficiently to wax enthusiastic about. Even "Parnell," in the "uncrowned King" days, was merely a word conveying some sort of beneficence that was to overshadow their condition in the dim future. The pity of it is that these same people were perfectly familiar with, and with their whole hearts execrated, the iniquity and injustice and oppression they conceived to be materialized in such expressions as "Black Michael," "Foxey Jack," "Bloody Balfour," and "Buckshot Forster." Light railways and telegraph wires have done much to dispel the darkness in which most of these people were engulfed, and education is blunting the prejudices of the less submerged masses, but it will take the passing of two or three further generations before these fantastic notions of the poor creatures of the western coast die—before they are altogether eradicated from the minds of the less cultured amongst Irish Nationalists generally.

In this regard, the views of John Mallon, together with the recital of an episode supremely characteristic of the simple worldliness of Chief Secretaries for Ireland, may not be without passing interest.

Mallon, as I have indicated elsewhere, would strike, and strike hard, for the betterment of the relations between the Executive and the people, in "the most distressful country." Confident he is that improvement in that direction will assuredly follow upon the growth and fuller development of the intimate and personal knowledge of one of the other. With wide—almost unique—experience to guide him, he declares, and with emphasis, that all the Chief Secretaries it has been his office to serve have proved

themselves, time and again, not only human, but human to the very verge of official weakness. Here is an instance, one of a vast number of similar continual happenings :

It was in 1866, and the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended. Arrests were pretty plentiful. Mallon was confidential clerk to the Superintendent of the Detective Department. There came to him one morning a young priest from the South of Ireland, with a strange request. The priest had a good stamp of features, but he was lean-looking. His face gave the impression that he had come from an out-of-the-way district, where food was none too plentiful, and what there was of it was too rough to assimilate with a nature fairly refined. He wore a soft " wide-awake " hat—such as Catholic clerics in Ireland mostly affect. An Inverness cloak almost entirely enveloped him, and was of that peculiar, almost indescribable tinge of colouring which usually marks the " black " of an Irish priest when his parish is large, his work heavy, his offertories light, and his wardrobe limited. In the wild mountainous districts of the South and West of Ireland it rains generously and without a suggestion of stinting when it rains ; and the clouds seem impregnated with alkali, or ozone, or something which affects the density and the brilliance of the black cloth of the priesthood. Maybe it is a sort of aniline dye, of a nondescript hue between russet and mauve, that falls from above ; in any case, the ravages produced by the rain when it falls in Ireland on the broad-cloth of the Catholic clergy are just the same.

Mallon's visitor wanted to see Earl Mayo, the (then) Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and he firmly declined to state his business as preliminary evidence of good faith. He had travelled all through the night and many hours of the previous day to get there, he said—his

dishevelled and dusty appearance was a witness for him—and his business was with Lord Mayo, and with him alone.

A weaker policeman would have hesitated; probably he would have "referred" the request before acting in the matter; but here was a Catholic priest with earnestness and distress writ large upon him, and that was enough for Mallon. He took the young cleric at once to the Castle and left him in an ante-room while he entered the Chief Secretary's room and announced that there was a priest from the South of Ireland who sought an audience.

"What does he want?" demanded Lord Mayo.

"I don't know," blandly returned Mallon.

"Bring him in," said the Chief Secretary.

Hat in hand, with trembling lips, the priest told his story. His younger brother, who was engaged in commercial pursuits in Dublin, had been arrested as a "suspect." The priest was there to beg for his brother's release. Prolonged imprisonment would inevitably ruin his career, but that was not the worst. It was hard to tell how far the iron of it might enter into his soul—mere boy that he was—and along what drift the calamity of prison thoughts might turn his after life.

"Let him go, my lord. Set him free again. There is no real harm in him, despite your information. He may have got amongst bad companions, but there can be no bitter evil in his mother's boy. The only bail a poor priest has to offer I'll give you for his good life in the future—my word of honour before God."

The Chief Secretary would have none of it. There was reason in his arrest, there was good ground for his detention, and the law must take its course.

The young priest pleaded hard and eloquently. Lord Mayo was inexorable.

"It is better," said the Chief Secretary, "that even thus early in his life he should risk the evils that gaol reflections may bring and be separated from his detestable associates. Where he is there is, at least, no fear of his becoming more deeply steeped in abominable conspiracy. No, I'll not release him."

"Very well, sir. And yet it is a very small request I have made to you on behalf of an erring brother, seeing that I myself have done more to preserve Her Majesty's peace in my district, and for many miles beyond it too, than all your constabulary and all your red-coats put together, Lord Mayo."

There was nothing threatening in the way the priest spoke the words. It was rather the last flickering effort to persuade—the final shaft of a despairing, almost hopeless, suppliant. As he said it, indeed, a rebellious tear overflowed his eyelid, and stood trembling between his high cheek-bone and the cavity into which his eye seemed to have shrunk in his distress. There was truth and honesty and desperate earnestness speaking loudly in every line of the face and figure that was there under the searching scrutiny of the statesman and the detective.

The priest turned towards the door.

Lord Mayo looked across at the policeman with an almost imperceptible expression of inquiry on his face.

Mallon's sympathetic interest was intense, and he made a motion that might have been taken for acquiescence or approval.

"Stay a moment," called the Chief Secretary, and he hurriedly wrote something on a sheet of crested note-paper.

"I'll take your word," said Lord Mayo to the priest, who had turned with the door handle in his hand; and as he threw the sheet of paper across the table to the officer,

he added: "Give him his brother, Mallon, and tell the young fellow from me to go down on his knees this night and thank God for giving him such a brother."

"I am glad to have met you, sir," said Lord Mayo as he advanced towards the clergyman with his hand outstretched.

The priest burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXII

FRANK POWER OF KHARTOUM

ONE of the most striking personalities I ever met in Ireland was embodied in Mr. Frank Power. The son of a bank manager, he had drifted into journalism, and at the time I met him in Dublin he was serving Mr. Dwyer Gray, the proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Evening Telegraph*. Power was brought prominently before the public through his connection with Khartoum at the time it was invested by the Mahdi, the fact that he was the only white man there to receive General Gordon and Colonel Stewart when they arrived, and the painful circumstances of his murder, with the latter, as they proceeded down the Nile at the command of Gordon, presumably to hurry up the relief expedition. He was somewhat of an artist, amongst other things, and he had gone out to the Soudan with Edmund O'Donovan, the brilliant war correspondent and rattling good fellow whom the world and journalism could ill-afford to spare at the time of his premature cutting down. O'Donovan was a kindred spirit, in some respects, with an absorbing passion for the romantic and a contemptuous disregard for conventionalities. I have known him blow off his revolver into a corner of the ceiling as he lay a-bed in the morning, rather than reach out for the bell-pull, when he wanted to assure his landlady he was awake and ready for a matutinal cup

of tea, or other form of "eye-opener"; and if it could be secured for money or fair words, he would always have "The Wearing of the Green" played by the band after "God save the Queen" at the termination of a social gathering with music. The reason for their sojourning towards the Equator was that Hicks Pasha was commissioned by the Khedive of Egypt to take an army and smash up the Mahdi. Unfortunately the "Prophet" took up the smashing business at about the same time, and after leaving Khartoum, Hicks Pasha, the Egyptian army, Edmund O'Donovan, and several other war correspondents were never seen again. Frank Power escaped the general massacre by the merest accident. He had been taken ill with dysentery, and had been left behind when the troops moved forward. When news of the disaster reached Khartoum, Power found himself the only white man, certainly the only subject of Queen Victoria, in the Soudanese metropolis, so he promptly appointed himself British Consul—a proceeding that was eminently characteristic of the man, and one that his friends would quite have expected of him. I subsequently heard Mr. Gladstone acknowledge the perfect propriety of the ordinance in the House of Commons, pointing out something to the effect that, being a British subject abroad, he was entitled to the protection of a consul, and as there was no other available person to hold the office, Mr. Power was entitled to the position of Her Majesty's Consul in order that he should be on a footing adequate to the duty of conserving the interests of Mr. Power. By the way, I wonder has Sir William Gilbert ever thought of that? I saw one of the last letters that Power was able to send out of Khartoum before communications were completely cut off. It was full of his comicalities, but he confessed that he was "pining for the sinful Strand," as he called it, and he

complained somewhat bitterly that hard fate for him had been very disrespectful towards the plums. Then came the journey down the Nile in Gordon's last available steamer, the works of which were very little better than a collection of empty ink-drums and German-made alarm-clocks, the sticking of the craft on a mud-bank in the middle of the stream, the forlorn-hope acceptance of the Sheik's invitation to land, and the subsequent poisoning or butchery—whichever it was. We who knew and cared for Frank Power never ceased to regret his loss, mostly for himself alone, but not a little for the wonderful book of which posterity was deprived.

I was standing in the middle of a police square that was drawn up in front of the General Post Office in Dublin, in 1881, I think it was. There had been a lot of trouble in the streets that night, and the police had been engaged in indiscriminately hammering in the heads of the populace. Colonel Talbot was in charge of the constables, and he had ordered them into this formation, and had caused them to turn inwards so that he could address them. He warned them that there had been sufficient violence that night, and he would have no more of it. They must "put up" their batons and do their best to disperse the mob without the use of them. Frank Power was standing beside me, and I well remember he was wearing a soft hat and a brown Inverness coat that gave him a very similar appearance to that we have become accustomed to since in another popular Bohemian journalist. He carried a heavy blackthorn with a huge head on it which he had a habit of holding with both hands at the back of him, with the nob pointed upwards, and every now and again he would cause the ponderous tree-trunk to tilt forward his hat, so that it rested far over his eyebrows. The whole attitude and aspect of the man was militant and bespoke strength and

fight. When Colonel Talbot gave his directions we saw many of the men place their truncheons up the sleeves of their coats, instead of putting them in their coat-tail pockets, so that a seemingly innocent bang with the forearm would become as momentous as the kick of a mule. As we were well aware that most of these fellows had changed uniforms before leaving barracks that evening, so that they should not be identified in case of accidents, or should at least be able to prove an *alibi* in the event of being summoned according to their numbers, and particularly as I had only managed to escape a vicious swipe with a club by about an inch and a half, Power and I were a little indignant at what we saw. Power was especially eloquent on the delinquencies of the British Government and their "liveried satellites," and he confided to me, as he whirled his murderous sapling, what he would like to do to the whole "nefarious, incarnate Saxon race, which with its Thuggish instincts presumed to hire degraded mercenaries to split the heads of decent Irishmen." As he got out the last word of his indignant protest, a half-brick, hurled from the mob, came whizzing over the heads of the policemen and caught him at the side of the head. He went down as though he had been felled with a pole-axe. Fortunately he was not much hurt, sustaining nothing beyond a temporary stunning and a bruise and a shaking. We picked him up, and as soon as he had pulled himself together again, he whispered to me: "It makes you almost inclined to curse your own countrymen—I declare to G—d, so it does."

Frank rushed into the *Evening Telegraph* office one day and fell into a chair, exhausted with overwrought emotion.

"Ah!" he groaned, throwing his hands out in front of him and then drawing them back to cover his eyes, as though to shut out some ghastly vision. "Ah!" he

gasped again; "poor Doctor ——" (mentioning the name of a well-known Merrion Square physician) "killed—stone dead—before my very eyes. Terrible! terrible!" The sub-editors ran to him, but he was too overcome to utter a sound other than groans until they had revived him with a considerable potion of brandy. Then it came in short, harassed pants: "Grafton Street—car skidded—curb—asphalte—brewer's dray—right over head—smashed skull—brains swept away—corporation's heap—poor Doctor ——! terrible! terrible!" A reporter quickly pieced the broken words together and flew up to the printer with them to catch an edition. Power was sufficiently recovered to drive away and seek the seclusion of his own rooms. Within an hour Dr. —— was down at the newspaper office, protesting with vigour against being disposed of by any such untimely tragedy. The young journalist "had such a way with him," that he survived that performance, but it was always a moot point as to what had possessed him to perpetrate the ghastly joke. Some said it was his innate love of romance, others that he was the momentary victim of a rather prolonged drought; but Power never told anyone.

His undoing, so far as the press of Dublin was concerned, occurred when he saw Mr. Parnell alight from a cab and make for the steps of Morrison's Hotel, at the corner of Nassau Street and Dawson Street. "Begum," said he to a friend who was with him, "there's Parnell. Let's go and tell him something." No sooner was the thought conceived than he acted upon it. Racing across the road, he called to the Irish leader, who turned to meet him before entering the door of the hotel. Power assumed a considerable amount of breathlessness, and speaking rapidly, explained that he had come from a meeting of rather desperate fellows down at Irishtown; that a rumour

had reached "the boys" that he, Mr. Parnell, had been arrested and taken off to the Castle. Thereupon they had passed a resolution to march into Dublin *en masse*, take the Castle by storm and release him. They were arming as they came along with anything they could clutch to use as weapons of offence, and there was already a perfect arsenal of revolvers amongst the crowd. Within an hour Dublin would be deluged with blood unless Mr. Parnell drove out to meet them, showed himself to the excited stalwarts and bid them go back again.

"As I heard the resolution passed I jumped on a car and drove for dear life to fetch you," said Power; "and if I did, some of the fellows sent a volley after me, thinking I must be a spy, and one of the bullets just grazed my leg here, as you may see by the rent in my trousers." And, sure enough, he had a tiny hole in his nether garment.

"But you are wounded, Mr. Power. Let us go at once to the hospital," said Mr. Parnell.

"'Tis nothing," answered the other; "it just ripped the cloth, but did not enter the flesh. There's no harm done beyond what feels like a bruise."

"This is very serious news. The best thing to be done is to find the Lord Mayor at once and put him in possession of the facts," decided the chief.

Mr. Edward Dwyer Gray was first magistrate at the time, and nothing loth, Power accompanied Mr. Parnell to seek him. Mr. Parnell probably smelt a rat; possibly he had heard of Power's little foibles, for he did not evince any very considerable amount of alarm. Frank duly repeated the story to his employer, and Mr. Gray also appeared to catch the flavour of the master romancer in it. At all events, he sent upstairs for his foreman printer, who was an old campaigner and understood gunshot wounds, to come down and inspect the "bruise," and when Power

went the length of exhibiting it, the mechanic emphatically pronounced it to be a blind boil.

Mr. Parnell laughed, and even Mr. Gray's face relaxed a bit, but the setting of the fiction was rather too much for the latter. So Power came to London, where he sought consolation with his friend O'Donovan, and ultimately journeyed with him to the Soudan and to his death, but not before he had won the laurels of a British Consulship and Special Correspondence for the *Times*, which were recognized by the bestowal of two sets of pensions upon his widowed mother and his two sisters.

Again I cannot help lamenting the wondrous story of the siege of Khartoum and life in the Soudan that was lost to the world when those detestable Arabs put poison into Frank Power's coffee.

CHAPTER XXIII

A DELICIOUS ROMANCE

POOR Frank Power! He had a wonderful personality, and his society was well beloved by all who knew him intimately. He possessed remarkable gifts as a raconteur. I have always thought that it was to these very extraordinary qualities that he owed much of his unenviable reputation for inveracity. He started a tale all right, but when he saw the flashing gleams of interest he was awakening in the eyes of his listeners, and noted their continual and regular recurrence, he allowed himself to be carried away in the whirl of enthusiasm he was himself creating, and cheerfully launched his narrative into an ocean of extravagance, if not of actual exaggeration. It was his delightful talents, indeed, that had much to do with the affectionate soubriquet bestowed upon him in Dublin, "Gassy Power," although I believe the adjective was also a corruption of the word "Gazieh," which is an Osmanli high distinction that Frank claimed to have had conferred upon him by Osman Pasha. The story of this claim is well worth the telling, and is eminently characteristic of the great majority of splendid stories told by Power, evincing, as it does, his keen appreciation of dramatic effect and picturesque colouring, and his almost slavish regard for details. The language of the description is mainly Frank's own—so far as I can remember it, it is wholly so. And perhaps I may pause to say that I at

least cannot forget the glint of unalloyed happiness that overspread his somewhat massive, but withal genial and open, countenance when he first realized that there was I, ready and willing and even anxious to hear the marvellous story—probably the solitary unit of the particular circles in which he mixed who had not heard and appreciated it already. Power used a single eye-glass, with which he made great play while telling a story, fixing and releasing it at dramatic points. It caused him rather more than the usual amount of facial convulsion that attends such performances to fix the monocle in his eye-socket. But he got great and impressive expression into it. He threw up his brows to the utmost extent of their capacity to travel and opened his mouth wide, with a curious, corner-wise and downward jerk of his lower jaw, while his enormous eyes continued to glare at and "fix" you, as it were. Then the whole thing seemed to snap back and the glass became a perfect fixture. To release the monocle the facial gyrations were pretty much the same.

It should also be said that the fact of Frank Power having been in Plevna during the investment by the Russians at the close of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 is well authenticated—indeed, the only doubts that were ever cast upon the circumstance were engendered by Power's frequent reference to "when I was in Plevna."

"It was like this," said Power. "To facilitate matters and enable me the better to perform my duties as a newspaper correspondent and obtain material for my sketches, I allowed myself to be appointed a lieutenant in the Turkish Army attached to the Staff of Osman Pasha, the greatest military genius in defence the world has ever seen.

"We were in Plevna, surrounded by an impenetrable forest of bayonets and big and little gun-muzzles. Every mother's son of us knew that the campaign of '77 was

drawing to a close. Never a one of us would allow the knowledge to take the form of words. The truth was there in the slackening waist-belts, the sunken cheeks and the starting eye-balls. The weak-knees, reduced to despair, muttered of 'best terms' to the man of brains and blood. The effort was regarded as a form of suicide or happy dispatch. Surely, many of them were never seen again.

"I was rummaging through an old pack-trunk for a pair of patent leather dancing pumps I had forgotten having with me until I discovered the painful inconvenience of putting stockinged feet into stirrups. Which reminds me that I have often thought since that I must have been endowed with unusual perspicacity when I insisted upon my top-boots and shoes for the campaign being made entirely of the very best brown, Irish pig-skin—delicious pig-skin. Well! I had just discovered my last stitch of foot-wear, and had put them handy for the morning, when the news spread through the charnel-house—that's what Plevna was—like an electric spark, that Osman Pasha would allow the cavalry one more chance; he had sanctioned one more sortie—a forlorn hope—to hazard the lives that were not worth living against cutting a way through that cruel barricade of antagonistic humanity and fire and iron and damnable explosives. Unrestrained, we were to make one more—a final—dash at the merciless Russians—at the villains who were wilfully causing the gnawing pains in our stomachs. It was glorious news! No more rest that night. At daybreak every man who could find a horse was ready. Every horse that was left and could stand, was there. Under cover of a hill the brigade formed up, and we got into a gentle gallop as we came into the open at the first blush of dawn. Without a doubt, every set of teeth was firmly set and every heart was light as the stomach beside it, for here was a chance

and the penalty for failure would be less painful and quicker than the madness of inactivity and the horrors of slow starvation. And what a thunderous, mighty, magnificent dash it was! Had there been steaming porterhouse steaks and fried onions and potatoes boiled in their jackets at the end of it, encouraging with their luscious odours, the cavalrymen could not have shown more zeal and enthusiasm. Maybe some such thoughts of acceptable repasts—each one to his fancy—did animate them. Onward we swept until we seemed to be almost up to the enemy's trenches, without a sign or a motion from the Russians. But it came at last. Just as we were, apparently, within striking distance there was one gigantic, hellish roar and we were faced with a huge, interminable wall of fire. Imagine the first night of a pantomime, the lights lowered and the thick series of gauze curtains down preparatory to slowly disclosing the transformation scene. Try and realize the gauzes catching fire and blazing out in a flash and all the electric lights and gas-jets on the stage being turned up and out again simultaneously with the momentary flare of the burning curtains, and there you have a simile like that of comparing a Lowther Arcade doll's-house to Windsor Castle. The glare, the suddenness and the shock of it were indescribable. The sea and horizon and heavens of flame seemed to scorch us, and there was a blow with it all that staggered us and shook us as an Atlantic liner staggers and shakes when she is hit by a mammoth wave. When you suddenly turn round a corner and run into a hurricane that stops you and nearly forces you backwards the instinct is to put your head down and lean up against it, as it were. We put our heads down and forged ahead. But when the first shock of the collision was over and I had time to think and to glance back over my shoulder, I saw that every leading officer of the brigade

had fallen to that first murderous belching of flame and lead. The men were wavering. There was no time to lose. Up to then, although a commissioned officer of the Turkish Army, I had merely disported myself as a conscientious newspaper correspondent on the look-out for a few paragraphs and incidents for descriptive matter. But here the instinct of the officer overcame me. To draw my sabre and whip my Colt out of the holster and slip my hand through the leathern strap on the butt of it was the work of an instant. In another moment I was at the head of the tottering brigade, and with a wild shout of 'Hooroo for Dublin!' I had rallied them and found myself in the thick of the *mêlée*. It was marvellous what an inspiriting effect my battle-cry had upon those unfortunate heathens, but it is likely they mistook it for some of their own gibberish, for I heard something uncommonly like it being repeated all over the sanguinary battle-field. But to resume: In less time than it takes to sing 'God save Ireland,' I found myself engaged in mortal combat with five burly, but nimble-moving Cossacks. I was just in time to dodge a savage slash at my pistol-arm and lay the fellow low with a bullet in the throat, when I became conscious that a big, bearded brute was taking deliberate aim at me with an enormous army revolver. To whisk my sabre round with a fine little bit of wrist play and tumble his head over in the dust was the effort of the infinitesimal fraction of an instant. You may have seen those fellows at the circus cut a sheep in half with a single stroke. It was a cut I am said to be particularly good at, and which I learned at school—the third cut in the single-stick exercise. A remarkable incident in the feat was that, owing to the extraordinary keenness of my sword, I succeeded in literally trimming the ruffian's whiskers, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the lower part of his beard float away on the breeze. There

was no time, however, for the calm contemplation of the interesting triviality, for I was conscious that a third opponent was clinging to my bridle and had only missed an effective coup through the restiveness and curvetting of my faithful charger. With the recovery, as it were, from the previous stroke, and using the force remaining in the still unexpended swing, I succeeded in delivering a really fine example of the first cut in the single-stick play. It was a beautiful performance and completely split the brute's head in two equal parts longitudinally, so that a half fell over upon either shoulder. Ugh! it was a shocking sight. I almost shudder, even now, when I recall it to mind. My fourth antagonist was a mounted warrior who had drawn off a short distance to obtain impetus for a terrific charge. As good fortune would have it the fellow's horse stumbled just as he was upon me and threw him high into the air. I was lucky enough to be able to catch him on the point of my weapon, and so completely and firmly was he impaled that I had some difficulty in shaking him off my trusty steel. The fifth man saved his hide by bolting. It flashed across my mind to pursue him, but I happened to momentarily turn my head to the rear, and I realized in an instant that the brigade had wavered and were in full retreat. What further could I do single-handed? Besides, I recognized that even a single life might be of some slight service to the greatest of generals in the hour of his *extremis*. I could see no reasonable alternative, so, bitterly disappointed, I turned my charger with a pressure from the knees, as I returned my blood-stained sabre to its sheath and my silver-mounted revolver to the holster, and trotted sadly back to the Turkish lines.

"In the arduous labours of 'cleaning up' after the fray I had almost succeeded in dismissing the incidents

of it from my memory, when, on the following morning, an orderly rode up to me in hot haste. 'Lieutenant Power?' said he. ''Tis myself,' said I. 'Osman Pasha desires the pleasure of your immediate attendance on the parade-ground,' said he. ''Tis myself that will be with him before he can recite the "Shamrock of Ireland,"' I replied, and the orderly galloped away.

"Arriving on the ground I was surprised to see the remnants of the brigade of cavalry drawn up in a mighty square, and strolling about, dismounted, in the centre of it was the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army, Osman Pasha, in full dress, attended by his entire staff in equally dazzling raiment. The cavalry made way for me and motioned me into the square, closing up again as I passed. Riding to the Commander-in-Chief's flagstaff, I saluted. I was surprised, but very delighted, to find that Osman Pasha stepped up to me, shook me warmly by the hand and cordially invited me to dismount. So soon as I had done so the staff gathered round and the brigade came to attention with drawn swords.

"And then a rather remarkable thing happened. I need hardly say I was consumed with curiosity to know what all this paraphernalia betokened. I was not long in doubt. Advancing towards me, and displaying considerable emotion, Osman Pasha, undoubtedly the greatest military genius and active practical soldier of our time, detached from his own breast a gorgeous and costly, bejewelled decoration he was himself wearing and affixed it to my tunic. As he did so, he proclaimed, in stentorian tones that could be heard far and wide: 'Lieutenant Power,' says he, 'I am proud,' says he, 'to decorate a braver man than myself.'

"On the instant that the great commander—probably the finest judge of soldiering at its best the world has ever

known—finished his exceedingly pleasant and obviously sincere declaration, the brigade of cavalry raised the hilts of their sabres to their chins and then brought the shimmering steel down at arm's-length, so that the points were now directed to the ground a little to the right of the horses' off-side fetlocks. That is the orthodox salute of the fighting brigade of the Turkish cavalry. A moment later they 'let go,' as you may say. The massed bands swelled out the strains of 'The Wearing of the Green," and the soldiers frantically waved their swords on high.

" I declare, by my love of the blessed banks of the Liffey, I never in the whole course of an adventurous career saw anything so fine. The flashing of the burnished steel as it turned and twisted and scintillated in the air, each blade glinting and glistening in the sublime Oriental sunshine, throwing off myriads of rays like the sparkling of superlative gems, was a fascinating and a glorious spectacle. And when the stirring and ennobling notes of the anthem ceased, with clarion and united voice the whole Turkish Army acclaimed to the echo, 'Gazieh! Gazieh!!' "

Power paused for breath. Adjusting his monocle with the peculiar contortion of his lower jaw I have already referred to, he explained to me:

" Which means 'valorous,' dear boy, 'valorous.' "

For several seconds I was lost in wonderment and complete admiration. On slightly recovering I allowed myself to be carried away by a first impulse. There was never anything in the whole course of my association with Frank Power that I so much regret. I fear my haphazard, casual curiosity and incogitancy pained my friend to the quick. I expressed a desire for the ineffable gratification of being allowed to feast my eyes upon the wondrous decoration that had been so gracefully bestowed by the greatest of mortal combatants.

The whole manner of his being changed in an instant. It was plain that violent indignation and deep emotion were struggling for the mastery. Releasing the monocle with a sudden upheaving of the brow, he fixed me with a glare of haughty disdain.

" 'Tis your proud privilege to disbelieve any statement of mine," said Power, " as it is the custom of your country to deny the claims of justice to Ireland. But as a friend of mine, as a colleague in the service of the Press, as a brother journalist, you have no right—you have no shadow of right, sir, to cast my temporary embarrassments into my teeth ! "

With great dignity he turned upon his heel and left me.

CHAPTER XXIV

GOD'S NOBLE WOMAN

EVEN in the vigorous coercive administration of Mr. W. E. Forster an occasional, intensely human chord was struck that did not reach the public ears. Those who were thrown into close contact with the right honourable gentleman have always held that the only real roughness in his nature existed in his rugged, gnarled-oak-like exterior. Inflexible and unyielding where he thought his duty lay, he became saturated with the view that obedience and humility must be the precursors of concession and amelioration, and he failed to appreciate the temperament of the people with whom he was dealing. Hence it was that he sacrificed the whole fruits of his arduous political life rather than submit when light came to Mr. Gladstone and he recognized there was no enduring peace, no Heavenly harmony, in chaining up a nation, even though the shadow materialized and the whole population of Ireland were in the end under lock and key. And yet, paradoxical as it appears, this Minister who posed before the world as a man of iron, panted for opportunities of secretly exercising leniency. One instance is as good as another. Here is an illustration.

Amongst the Leaguers who were placed under arrest by virtue of Mr. Forster's "Suspects" Act was a man who had been convicted in connection with the Fenian rising, known as the '68 movement, and had actually served a

long term of imprisonment. The necessity for his incarceration at this time was not quite apparent to those who were fairly familiar with the circumstances; but then, at that juncture, when panic occupied so prominent a place in the characteristics of the Administration, it was vain to attempt to fathom the inwardness of the Governmental mind. There he was in gaol with or without rhyme or reason, although no one outside what I would call the ornamental officialdom of Dublin Castle could be induced to believe there was the slightest existing mischief in the ex-convict. That was the state of things when one afternoon there came to Mallon this man's wife in very great distress. Mallon had known her from her childhood, and, like a good many other people in Ireland at the time, she had almost unlimited faith in the influence and the power to do nearly anything of the indulgent policeman. In anguish she explained that her small boy was stricken down with scarlet fever, and he was constantly crying out for his "Daddy." Something must be done to bring the father home and Mallon must do it. There must be no equivocation. The child was desperately ill and might die; nay, he would die, unless his craving to see his father were satisfied. And what could she tell the mite when the parent expected with every footfall, with every sound, never approached; the longed-for never came. Long ago "Daddy" had promised certain toys, and in his moments of extreme sickness the wee sufferer remembered it. The joy of the home-coming and the toys might save the little life. It was the one desperate chance. Was it possible to deny it? The babe would surely die unless the mother's prayer were granted, and then the suspect's heart would be broken, for he idolized his child. It was unthinkable that there should be any danger in allowing such a man, such a manly man, to come to the bedside of his deeply afflicted

and expectant offspring—and see! how easy it would be to take him back once more as soon as the precious spark had been fanned into flame again. No! there could be nothing so cruel as to wilfully work the death of this tiny innocent.

"John," as I believe the mother called Mallon, could not realize the picture and continue unmoved. He would do his best, and "Mary," as he called her, must wait for him a while.

Whenever Mallon had some particularly delicate matter of strategy to work out and felt in want of sympathetic countenance he almost invariably sought out kindly, benevolent, tender-hearted Dr. Carté, the prison doctor, whose peculiar official position, added to his personal charm, enabled him to carry off with a dictatorial insistence a proposition that many a higher placed authority would have hesitated to even advance. Besides, he had the "open sesame" to the Chief Secretary's private room, and it was well known that Mr. Forster welcomed the visits of Dr. Carté, for the latter was the medical man responsible for the health of the suspects, and it delighted him just as much to set a man free as it did Dr. Carté to seize on the smallest justification for saying to him: "You are imperilling that man's life by keeping him in prison." Accordingly Mallon went to Dr. Carté and enlisted his good offices. It did not take much labouring to induce the enthusiasm of the impressionable medical man, and together they at once secured an interview with the Chief Secretary. Dr. Carté took charge of the brief for the applicant and opened up a fine battery of eloquence on the urgency of the case, which certainly interested Mr. Forster, although he was somewhat amused by the earnestness of the advocate. At last, as the doctor paused, sparring for wind as it appeared, the Chief Secretary leaned back in his chair,

and assuming his most severe judicial aspect, demanded: "What sort of a proposal is this, that you, as a medical man, with your grave responsibilities as prison doctor, are making to me, Dr. Carté? You suggest taking this man out of the place of detention, where he is associating daily with a hundred and more of his fellow-suspects, bringing him to a house you know to be infected with fever, and then calmly conveying him back again to spread the contagion, it may be, broadcast throughout the gaol. What becomes of your sense of precaution and your duty to your other charges? How are you going to do it?" Dr. Carté was frankly nonplussed. He had never thought of that. He fidgeted about for a few seconds, and then in a sort of despair he turned to Mallon. "What have you to say to that, Mallon?" he asked.

"I see no difficulty at all," replied the detective. "It's a very simple matter, Mr. Forster. Let him out altogether. I'm not a bit afraid of——"

"Ah! doctor," said the Chief Secretary, "Mallon has far more perception and resource than you have. I am obliged to you, Mallon, for the idea. He shall be released for good and all. Let him go back to his family, but mind this, Mallon, I shall hold you responsible for him."

"I will cheerfully accept the charge," agreed Mallon, and that evening the suspect was back with the sick boy, and I have a suspicion that the policeman assisted at the purchase of the toys he took with him to his child.

The babe was made well and the gratitude of the mother was unbounded.

In many instances it was just by simple acts of consideration, such as I have described, that Mallon became possessed of invaluable information. It is surprising that there should have been such numbers of women amongst those who, from time to time, sounded the note of warning

to Mallon; but perhaps it is the more surprising still that there should have been so many of them in a position to do so through the garrulity of their husbands or their brothers, their cousins or their uncles. Still it was so, and I am in a position to affirm that it was precisely by reason of a very similar exercise of clemency that the sequel to the Park murders came to be enacted as and when it was.* Mallon had established a claim to thankfulness and a feeling of obligation had sprung up in the heart of a woman. The germ from which it grew was just such another effort of kindly grace that cost nothing but a trifle of time and personal attention. The "Star Chamber" inquiry conducted by Mr. John Adye Curran, K.C., had been dragging its weary length along from the end of November, 1882, until the early days of January in the following year. Mallon was gradually, slowly but certainly, piecing the meshes as he went along, drawing the net of retributive justice closer and tighter around the "Invincible" murder conspirators. On Thursday morning, January 8th, 1883, Mallon received a letter of warning that his life and that of Mr. Curran were alike in imminent peril. It came from a woman with the sentiment of "never forget" in her soul. The detective was truly moved, for he knew the source of the information, and he felt he could implicitly rely upon it. He did nothing immediately, however, but watchfully awaited the developments that he was intuitively conscious must come. In the early part of the afternoon the woman came to him. She was the wife of an ardent and distinguished Nationalist, a Member of Parliament, who was much respected by his countrymen, and whose name was favourably regarded by

* The necessity for dissembling having passed away since this chapter was written, I am free to state that the lady I now refer to was the same whose little boy was stricken with scarlet fever, and who went to Mallon as I have described above.

the public for many years. She was tremendously excited —in a state bordering on hysteria. If certain men she mentioned—Brady was one of them and Curley was another—were not at once arrested, neither Mallon nor Mr. Curran would be alive to continue their inquiry on the following Monday morning. She knew the positive truth of the news she brought him. She ran across the room, threw her arms about his neck, and kissed him on the cheek, and begged and prayed of him to believe her. He must not die while she had power to save him—had he not preserved the sunshine in her life? If he would not promise her upon his soul that he would act without delay, he must not leave his office that night. He must remain where he was, surrounded by a guard of his most trusted lieutenants. Should she fail to extract that pledge she would not leave his side. Where he went she would go—at least, he should have the knowledge that in denying her he was risking her very existence. The spirit of gratitude had, indeed, entered into the Irish heart of this woman.

Mallon believed her. The subsequent confessions of the informers and the acknowledgments, made in various shapes and forms, by nearly all the others amply corroborated her, and justified him in accepting her word. A most formidable plot was in the hatching for the "removal" of both Mallon and Mr. Curran, and beyond the possibilities of doubt they would both have been brutally butchered on the approaching Saturday night. It was thought that the progress of the Star Chamber inquiry was too rapid, that the developments were too certain, and that the only shred of safety there was for the murder club lay in the immediate assassination of the magistrate and the detective.

Mallon decided to consult Mr. Curran. Then a slight difficulty cropped up. This lady would not allow him to

move without her escort. No matter what protection he had, she would not lose sight of him. The only means of pacifying the poor creature, half crazed with apprehension, was to have conveyed an earnest request that Mr. Curran would come to him. Under a strong guard Mr. Curran came. Within an hour the Attorney-General had been placed in possession of the facts, and under his authority Mr. Curran took general informations from a number of detective officers and at once issued warrants for the arrest of the "Invincibles," which were handed to Mallon to execute. The story of the simultaneous pouncing down upon the criminals so as to prevent the confusion and difficulties that might have arisen from isolated apprehensions that would have caused a fluttering in the cote, ending in possible flight, has already been told. The thunder-clap, when it came, was manipulated by a master hand, and the culprits had no opportunity of learning upon whom else the rod of Nemesis had fallen until they found themselves together in the dock. At this time there was no mention in the warrants of the Phœnix Park assassinations or of the attack on Mr. Field. The charge was vaguely drawn of "Conspiring to murder certain Government officials and others."

There is rarely any serious happening in the British government of Ireland without its suggestion of sentimental comedy, and the element of a lighter side accordingly crept into even these portentous proceedings. The warrant for the arrest of Michael Fagan, who was subsequently hanged, was issued with the rest, but it was not executed until some days after the other accused had been placed in safe custody. The wife of the person for whom Fagan worked had recently died, and a "wake" was in progress, which the suspect was participating in. By the way, a "wake" in Ireland, as I have witnessed it, is an exceedingly

impressive and edifying religious ceremonial, and bears no sort of resemblance to the popular ideas entertained with regard to it in this country, or to the style of gathering depicted by the late Mr. Dion Boucicault. In any case Fagan was taking part in a "wake," and the Irish Executive thought it would be an effort of the very worst taste to disturb him, or to take any steps that might wound the feelings of the other mourners. Accordingly his apprehension was postponed for a few days, and until such time as his engagements permitted of it being carried out with proper decorum. I hasten to explain, however, that Fagan was under very strict surveillance the whole time.

The noble woman whose sense of favour was so perfect and whose requital was so splendid, is dead. She suffered a tragic end. Her grave holds the best admiration it is in the heart of one man to bestow upon a woman's memory.

CHAPTER XXV

THE WAYS OF SOME JOURNALISTS

THE days of the early eighties were strenuous times for the pressmen—the permanent Dublin scribes and those who held special commissions from England and Scotland alike. The competition for "the latest" and for "exclusive" items was keener than I ever knew it before or since. Not only was the rivalry between the local men great, but each important newspaper in the Irish capital had charge of the correspondence of one or other of the great news agencies, and many of the chief reporters held personal retainers from the English and Scottish dailies. Every man's wit was in the main, therefore, turned against every other man's; and in some cases the antagonism spread to the relations existing between the regular correspondents and the specially accredited representatives of the same organizations. This state of things led, of course, to the adoption of every conceivable device and deception in the gleaning of information. To such lengths was the conflict carried, indeed, that occasionally a "special" would discover a "moonlight" notice in one of his boots when he came to put them on in the morning. One well-known London journalist, who is no longer with us, alas! was very severely marked out for treatment of this kind. He represented one of the then biggest of our London morning papers, and he had had the temerity to undertake some telegrams on Saturdays for a

Sunday paper that already possessed a Dublin representative. The most lurid and alarming threats reached him under all conditions and surrounded by mysterious circumstances. They were, as one might suppose, invariably anonymous, decorated with the usual symbols of terrorism —the skull and cross-bones, the dripping dagger, the coffin, the transfixed heart, the bloody hand, etc., etc.— and bore, as a rule, the superscription of "Captain Moonlight," "Rory of the Hills," and the like. Some of us, newspaper men who were fairly used to the ways of the Dublinites, tried our hardest to reassure our friend and colleague, but after a persistent bombardment of about a week, the persecution got on his nerves, and he wired home asking to be withdrawn. His successor, who had no orders to interfere with the correspondence to the Sunday paper, was received with open arms and all went well.

One of the most energetic "hustlers" for "beats," as he called them, was Fred Gallaher, editor of the Irish sporting paper, whose proper sphere of operations ought to have held him aloof from the mere scavenging of interesting general facts. But when there was adventure about, that involved scheming and feverish excitement and danger, it was impossible to keep Fred Gallaher quiet. And nothing really appealed to him like the most extravagant and reckless propositions. A fair insight into his character was provided when one of the London and North Western boats—I think it was the *Ireland*—got out of her course in a heavy sea—or, maybe, it was a fog— and "bumped" a little just outside Holyhead. It was certainly touch-and-go with her, and undoubtedly there was plenty of excitement amongst the panic-stricken passengers. Gallaher was aboard, and when the shrieking and praying and moaning commenced, he took up a fairly warm position to the weather side of a smoke-stack, and

when at last the boat was safely moored alongside the landing stage he had a full column of "descriptive" written and ready to hand in at the telegraph office for the *Freeman's Journal.*

Well, Gallaher formed the opinion that the great informer James Carey ought to be interviewed in prison for the benefit of the Irish people and to the advantage of the *Freeman's Journal* in particular. It looked a difficult matter, and the obstacles appeared insurmountable. But difficulties only whetted the appetite of the voracious newsman. He sought out Carey's wife and ascertained that she had an appointment to visit her husband in Kilmainham on the following day. One of the privileges of the informer was that he was permitted to receive his wife and family from time to time. Gallaher persuaded Mrs. Carey as to the advisability of "putting James right" with the public and removing any suspicion of perfidy there might exist. Connubial prejudice probably suggested to the simple mind of the contractor's partner that such a scheme was quite feasible, and would become a perfectly simple matter if left in the hands of Dublin's most ubiquitous journalist. The rest was easy. She must arrange to take her infant in arms to help cheer the paternal heart of James, and Gallaher would provide the prisoner with a temporary brother-in-law, who would relieve the anxious mother by carrying the youngster. Then the work of transmogrifying young Kirwan—"Sonny" Kirwan—an intelligent and active young sporting journalist and member of Gallaher's staff into a stonemason's labourer, was undertaken. Kirwan was a bright, dapper, good-looking young fellow, and the "make-up" was an exceedingly clever one that might have deceived his inamorata even. Off went the party, Kirwan holding the baby, and they succeeded in getting as far as the waiting-room of the

prison. The Deputy Governor was perfectly satisfied that the simple-visaged, rather sawney looking "brother-in-law" should make one of the visiting party, particularly as he might prove an invaluable asset if Mrs. Carey "took on" to the extent of hysteria and the infant required attention. There seemed nothing in the world likely to mar the complete success of the enterprise. At the psychological moment, however, Mallon popped his head into the room—Mallon seemed to spend a very great deal of his time in and about Kilmainham during the period that immediately followed the capitulation of Kavanagh and Carey. He nodded a more or less non-compromising "Good afternoon" to Mrs. Carey, and walking straight over to James' "brother-in-law," he took the baby from him and handed it to its mother. Then he said: "Come on, 'Sonny'! It's very good and nice of you to have carried the kid, but I'll just trouble you to wait for Mrs. Carey outside the gates." Kirwan was very disappointed and so upset at the failure of his mission that he entirely forgot to wait and carry the child home again.

"Faint heart never won a thrippeny-bit," was a favourite maxim of Gallaher's, and "Once down's no battle," was another. The success of Mallon in upsetting his calculations when they were upon the very verge of consummation gave piquancy, added flavour, to the task the sporting writer had set himself. Again he sought Mrs. Carey, and this time he handed to her several sheets of thin foolscap paper with about ten questions written in a bold round-hand on each page. There were about one hundred and twenty questions—leading questions—altogether, and they were carefully drafted so as to cover almost all the points it was possible for James Carey to say anything interesting upon, and each of them was capable of a direct "Yes" or "No." The manipulation

of the various items contained in the questions, as affirmed or negatived by the arch-conspirator, would, when strung together and written up in interview form, make most acceptable newspaper "copy," of the large-black-type-on-the-contents-bill variety. Here is an example of the kind of thing that was contemplated by this novel method of securing an interview.

Q. "Are you as well and happy and hopeful as the trying situation in which you find yourself will allow?"—*A.* "Yes."

Q. "Was it the knowledge that some of the other fellows were giving the game away that induced you to offer evidence, repugnant as was that course to your better nature and your firm intentions up to the last moment of uncertainty in this respect?"—*A.* "Yes."

These answers alone would obviously be capable of several invaluable headlines, such as "Other Traitors in the Camp!" "Carey's Abhorrence of Queen's Evidence!" and the like, and the "copy" would read pretty much in this way:

"At an interview, surreptitiously obtained by our special commissioner and exclusive crime investigator, James Carey, the now notorious informer, who, dressed in his usual every-day clothes, was looking extremely well, expressed himself as feeling as happy and contented as the trying circumstances of his situation at the moment would allow. There is no doubt, moreover, that he is buoyed up with perfect hopefulness as to the ultimate outcome of the whole of this terrible business, at least, in so far as he is personally concerned.

"'I am anxious,' said Carey, 'that you should explain to my friends and the public that I have the utmost horror and detestation of the man who turns "Queen's evidence," and betrays his compatriots. Such a course of conduct is

entirely foreign to my nature, and under ordinary circumstances the rack, or even the ordeal by fire, would not have induced me to peach against those who had loyally stood by me. But it came to my certain knowledge, soon after I was arrested and incarcerated within these four walls, that those I had trusted, and was still prepared to trust, with my life and my salvation were sordidly endeavouring to put the rope around my neck and offering me up to sacrifice in order to serve their own ends. Up to the last moment that there was the slightest straw of uncertainty in the matter for me to catch at, I remained firm and loyal and true. But when at last that straw was swept away, I determined that the only honourable course for me to pursue, seeing my responsibilities and my bounden duty to my wife and little children, was to meet double-dyed duplicity and attempted cowardly outrage by a full and frank and honest statement of the facts of the case concerning those who were basely plotting to encompass my undoing,' " and so on and so forth.

Mrs. Carey was to conceal these precious pages of queries about her person, together with a small piece of pencil, and to pass them on to James. The latter was to occupy his spare moments, when the vigilant eye of the watchful warder was not upon him, in marking them with " Yes," and " No," and on her next visit Mrs. Carey was once more to confide the sheets of foolscap to her bosom and faithfully deliver them to her trusted, reputation-cleansing newspaper friend. The scheme worked admirably. The paper went in and came out again all right, duly authenticated by Carey. No one questioned the wife of the prisoner as to what she took in or out; as I have shown in another part of these reminiscences it was rather the policy of Mallon to allow James Carey an unusual amount of latitude in regard to such things. Gallaher got just what he wanted,

and with a yell of happy triumph published "the interview" in the *Freeman's Journal*. The most striking feature of the proceeding, however, was furnished by a foot-note Carey added to the list of questions and answers, and which read: "Tell your d——d old father that I'll look after him when I get out of this." The gentleman referred to was, of course, Mr. J. B. Gallaher, father of the sporting scribe and the highly respected editor of the *Freeman's Journal*. After Carey became an informer Mr. Gallaher wrote, or caused to be published, some caustic criticisms of the man and his methods, and it seems likely, from the postscript to his black-and-white catechism, that among the privileges he was then enjoying was an occasional glimpse at the morning papers.

I myself had great hopes at one time that I should succeed in getting a brief interview with Carey, but at the crucial moment they were rudely dashed to the ground. I had met Mr. George Bolton, the Crown Solicitor, in the neighbourhood of Kilmainham Prison, and he told me he was going to visit Carey to interrogate the prisoner on one or two minor points. I casually suggested that I should like to accompany him, and to my astonishment he at once acquiesced. He took me in and introduced me to the Deputy Governor as "a London friend of his," and then asked that the prisoner Carey should be brought to him. I am under the impression that the official recognized me as the journalist who had had an interview with Mr. Parnell in Kilmainham the year before, and whom he had had occasion to ask to withdraw, because Mr. Parnell and I commenced to talk politics, which were taboo in that atmosphere. In any event, he said, politely but very firmly, that Mr. Bolton had better see Carey in the usual visiting room while I remained where I was and possessed my soul in patience until the Crown Prosecutor returned.

What may be called "the methods of Gallaher," later on served me in good stead. The authorities had decided that the execution of the convicted "Invincibles" should take place in private. That is to say, that the Press should be excluded, and that none but the recognized prison officials should witness the last scene in the tragedy. There we were, faced with a greedy public appetite on one side and no apparent facilities for satisfying it. Then it was that we thought of the multitudinous questions that lend themselves to "yes" and "no" and go in combination with either to make up unexceptionable "copy." The local correspondent of the *Central News*, who is now a flourishing barrister practising in Ireland, and I framed a most comprehensive series of queries. The Dublin pressman found a willing official whose duties necessitated his witnessing the execution of Joseph Brady. Within five minutes of the black flag being hoisted outside the gaol that official came through the gates and handed us our sheaf of foolscap pages, with the great bulk of our questions marked "Yes" or "No." Off we dashed, as fast as a fast car could carry us, to the telegraph office in Sackville Street. There we divided the sheets of questions and answers and started to churn out "copy" as rapidly as we could. By nine o'clock we had upwards of a column of graphic description, by an "eye-witness," on the wires to nearly every evening paper in the three kingdoms. I think I may safely say that there was no other "authentic," detailed report of that closing scene published anywhere.

CHAPTER XXVI

SOME INTERESTING DUBLIN CHARACTERS

LOOKING back to experiences in Ireland, although they covered the most strenuous periods of Land League activity, the meanderings of "Captain Moonlight," and examples of what Mr. Gladstone in a misguided outburst of anger and unconscious satire described as "the resources of civilization," the retrospect is by no means all gloom. There is that which is immensely alluring about the dear old country for those who come to know her, and in her darkest hours there has always been something in the hospitality and the humour and the many inherent lighter characteristics of her people that invariably furnished a radiant lining to the darkest of clouds. In the narrative of a few of the marks of personality I have fallen across, of items grave and gay that have struck me during the jaunts and junketings it has been my privilege to sandwich into periods of agitation and even strife, I should like it distinctly understood that I am advancing nothing that pretends to describe types of the Irish people. Your Shaughrauns, and even your Harvey Duffs, may certainly exist—I know there are such people in Ireland, for I have met them—and so do your Sam Wellers and your Uriah Heeps, but they are not typical of the people amongst whom you find them.

A distinguished journalist recently went through Ireland, and it is apparent that he must have met some interesting

studies in the form of ne'er-do-wells and "native wits," but he libelled a people when he represented them as types and he deceived his readers when he let them absorb the impression that they are numerous. Perhaps he was not sufficiently familiar with the land and its inhabitants to appreciate how easily these special varieties can be provided, on the spur of the moment, whenever there is a ready and greedy market on the spot to be supplied. I have heard perfectly respectable citizens of Dublin—men who, at a general election, were quite likely to make a cross against the name of a Tory—give, as a toast, "May the harp of old Ireland never want a string while there's a gut in a policeman." And this at a time when the country was in a perfect ferment, when crime was rife and public safety was altogether a negligible quantity. The uninitiated might possibly take the earnestly whispered aspiration seriously. In that case its object was achieved. The fellow who uttered it would have tongue in cheek all the while, and the relish and gusto to him would be in witnessing the unsophisticated Saxon swallow it as an evidence of the terrible condition of devilment to which the whole population had arrived and the absolute want of hope for the survival of law and order.

Indeed, it is very hard to know when to take some Irishmen seriously. Some of the mildest mannered men amongst them often proceed to alarming extremes on occasions when it is in their hearts to amuse. I remember a remarkable scene that happened at a wayside station in Wicklow in the early eighties, and which would probably have considerably stirred the Earl of Spencer had it come to his knowledge. A party of us were returning from Glendalough on a fine summer's Sunday evening. We were occupying a special saloon and the occasion being a purely social one, we might have been described as an

omnium gatherum crowd of Catholics and Protestants, loyalists and Nationalists, an ex-Fenian or two and a fair sprinkling of cosmopolitan newspaper men. I happened to be discussing Mr. Gladstone and his fondness for addressing mobs from railway carriage windows and the enormous amount of enthusiasm he was able to work up in the few fitful minutes it took an ordinary train to run in and out of a railway station. "Nothing easier, my boy. Look at this," said a young friend of mine, who was a steady and usually retiring, solid business man of Dublin, who would just as soon have thought of applying for the post of Viceroy as he would of attending a political meeting at that time. The train was stationary at the moment and the letters on the lamps betokened that we were at, or near to, Delgenny—a peaceful village where the wildest Sunday evening's dissipation within the reach of the inhabitants is to witness the arrival and the departure of the Dublin train. Before I had time to think of what was happening, my companion had thrown off his hat and had thrust rather more than half his body through the carriage window. Sweeping first one arm and then the other over as large a semicircle as he could command, and in a rich, mellifluous voice that drowned every other sound for a considerable distance, he literally roared: "Men o' Delgenny! There is no time for me to introduce to you the noble patriot it is your honour to have in your midst this night and to whom it would be your proud pleasure to show obeisance. But listen to what I have to say; take my precious words home with you and treasure them in your hearts of hearts as you would the care of your most sacred charge. The only hope for Ireland is in the whiz o' the bullet, the flash o' the sabre, the roll o' the drum; the argument of rebellion, the logic of a blow." In a twinkling, as the first words were uttered, a very

considerable crowd of gaping yokels had gathered in front of the carriage and as the last note of the apostrophe was sounded, the air was rent with cheers. The train was whistled away before the extempore joker could make another word heard above the fevered acclamations, and as he fell back exhausted into the seat beside me and while the shouts of approval were still ringing in our ears, he modestly whispered to me: "It's quite easy to raise enthusiasm on railway platforms, if you only know what the ears of your audience are thirsting for and if you give it them sufficiently hot and strong."

Do not let us run away with the fallacy that during these heroic times the Nationalists were wholly without critics in their midst. One of the most severe of these that I managed to stumble across in Ireland was an old fellow named White, who was the "peri at the gate" of the Dublin Mansion House. I am not certain that the position was a hereditary one, but White was undoubtedly regarded as a sort of modern Vicar of Bray. And he filled the position with portly grace. His proportions were "aldermanic" to the "out" size, and, probably, there never was quite so extensive a pair of calves encased in civic fleshings. "True, they have the *clothes*," said White to an admirer, when asked his opinion of Sir John Stuart Knill's two flunkeys as they towered far above everyone about them and dazzled with the gorgeousness of their gold and plush adornments, "but thanks be to goodness, we've the *men*," he added as he blew himself out and made his best possible effort to slap his chest approvingly.

White was more familiar with the Mansion House than were the bantlings—as he seemed to regard in-coming Lord Mayors—and when the Nationalists began to dominate the Corporation he would have ruled the first magistrate with a rod of iron had he been allowed his way. I have

known him come into the Lord Mayor's parlour for the purpose of presenting a visitor's card. He had the salver in his left hand hanging down by his side, and the card held close up to his nose as he scrutinized it. "Mr. So and So wants to see you," he said, as he read the name off the card. "Sure, that fellow's no good at all—you'll not be wanting to see him," he decided, as, with a gesture of very decided disgust, he turned on his heel and left the room, without the Lord Mayor having had the remotest chance of inspecting the "pasteboard." The chief occupant of the Mansion House at the time was a genial littérateur and he just smiled and allowed the idiosyncrasy of the hall porter to pass. It was on account of little autocratic efforts of this sort that White was invested with the title of "permanent Lord Mayor." Very naturally, therefore, the criticism I refer to carries the greater weight and authority. I had been dining with the Lord Mayor at one of the ceremonial dinners of the Mansion House, and having some late news telegrams to dispatch, I made my excuses and left early, in company with the late Mr. Edward Byrne, of affectionate memory, the principal leader-writer of the *Freeman's Journal*, whom we used to delight in calling "the doctor."

As White gave me a hitch up with my overcoat, "the doctor" said: "Well, White, and how do you like the new *régime*—now that you've got rid of the crusted old fossils and have the real blood of the nation looking after you?"

"Ah! sure, doctor, I don't know what's coming over the poor old Mansion House at all," lamented White. "In the good old days, when we had the Dublin merchants and the great tradesmen and the county families presiding here, and them inviting all their richest friends and the likes of their-own-carriage-people to come down here and join them in a bit of food and a 'crack' after-

wards, it would be no strange sight for me to see a half a score and more of small gold pieces nestling amongst a plateful of silver on the table beyond there—and I declare to you, doctor, it would not bedazzle my eyes to observe a sprinkling of whole sovereigns showing themselves here and there. But now! Well, there, doctor, I declare to you it breaks my heart to have to say it about my own countrymen and my brother patriots at that (as you well know yourself, doctor), you would want to have eyes in the back of your head to see they don't tamper with the decoy two-shilling piece."

Perhaps the most unconsciously humorous estimate of a great political party and appreciation of the gentlemen who represent the fourth estate of the realm was voiced by a well-known and popular hotel proprietor in Dublin. It was in the evening of the day on which Mr. Dillon was arrested under the Suspects Act. Mr. Parnell had been locked away in Kilmainham Gaol a day or two before. There was, of course, tremendous excitement in Dublin and the vast majority of the population were in the streets. The centre of attraction became the Imperial Hotel, opposite the General Post Office, in Sackville Street. This particular hostelry, for years the rendezvous of priests visiting the capital, had become the special affectation of the Land League Members of Parliament, and a vast concourse of people had been drawn to the outside of it in the hope of hearing speeches on the situation. The members who were in the city, and were known to have preserved their liberty for the nonce, were loudly called upon, one by one, for a few words. Eventually it was agreed that the mob should be addressed from the balcony outside the windows of the coffee-room, which was high up on the first floor of the Imperial Hotel. Then it was that Mr. Charles Lawlor, the proprietor, came to the front in an

amazing state of discriminative trepidation for his various clients. "That balcony is unsafe," he declared; "miserably unsafe—positively trembling in its insecurity. It will undoubtedly come down, and so surely will someone be killed outright. Let no one—I will allow no one but Members of Parliament and the Press to get out upon it. They are certain to be killed!"

About the same time as the occurrence I have related above, a strange incident happened on O'Connell Bridge, or Carlisle Bridge, as it was then called, if I remember rightly. The Northern and the Southern Metropolitan Police districts were separated by the Liffey, and presiding over the Court of Summary Jurisdiction in one of them was a very stern stipendiary magistrate who had not an ounce of sympathy with the more or less natural festivities of any occasion, while the other was under the sway of a full-living gentleman who had a kindly leaning towards the well-turned excuse for a temporary lapse into excessive conviviality. This is a characteristic that has marked more than one Dublin magistrate, and it is even said to have been no uncommon act for "his worship," after an evening at the club that had eventuated in a little heady indisposition on the following morning, to hand the clerk half a sovereign before taking his seat on the bench, with a request that he would "put it in the poor-box"—this by way of enabling him to start off fairly and evenly with the administration of unprejudiced and even-handed justice. Of the two law-givers I am dealing with, one was known as a "full-fine-first-offence" man, which meant "five shillings," while the other was a genial "pay-a-shilling-and-get-along-out-of-that" individual. A roysterer crossing the bridge appeared to be wrestling with the parapet and he twisted and contorted himself terribly in his efforts to drag himself across the structure.

"What's up with *you?*" demanded a police constable, approaching him. "That's a fixture you have a hold of, and it's no use you trying to put it in your pocket. Come on now! Go to blazes out o' that."

"Shish!" murmured the struggler, and he held up a warning finger after making a final, mighty effort; "not a word! Sure, *I'm saving four shillings.*"

CHAPTER XXVII

MALLON AND THE PARNELL COMMISSION

IT is not generally known that Mallon was actually subpœnaed to give evidence before the Parnell Commission, and that in answer to the subpœna he came to London. But he did not give evidence. No doubt many of the *pros* and *cons* that surrounded this remarkable fact will be familiar to the present Lord Chief Justice of England and to Lord James of Hereford, while others—what I may call the connecting links—were, of course, well known at the time to the Chief Commissioner of Police in Dublin, Sir David Harrel. The official reason that Mallon gave for his disinclination to enter the witness-box was that any kind of evidence he might be called upon to give would tend to destroy his influence with the army of informers he had at his beck and call. The latter could not know that he had given no "proof" of his evidence either to one side or the other—the mere assertion in the witness-box that such was the case would have no power to convince men whose every conclusion was begotten in suspicion. The asking of a simple question on behalf of the *Times*, or the most casual proposition in cross-examination on behalf of Mr. Parnell and the Irish Parliamentary party, although he point-blank refused to answer it, or fenced it, or even if, in the exercise of his official discretion and in the best interests of law and order and loyalty to the country he served, he swept aside an allegation, or strenuously denied

it, the virus was there all the same in the question itself. During a long course of years Mallon had woven a wonderful network of informers and spies, probably the most remarkable that was ever got together by any one policeman within these three kingdoms, and he was able to hold it and control it, and go on adding to it from time to time, only by reason of his absolute loyalty to the persons who trusted him and whose very existence was literally in his keeping. He urged, therefore, with all his strength, that the moment he put foot on the first step leading to the witness-box in the Parnell Commission Court, his influence would instantly vanish, and the advantages he then possessed in the process of protecting life and property would immediately dissolve.

I have always thought that there were other considerations that caused Mallon to shrink from appearance in the witness-box on this particular occasion—reasons other than his official objection—which applied with special force in this case, and which were altogether apart from his general disinclination to make public profession of any information he might command. There are a couple of circumstances within my knowledge that I cannot help thinking had a peculiar bearing on the point I am discussing. I may, of course, be wrong, for they deal with a section of the "Invincible" conspiracy that Mallon was always chary of discussing with me in any great detail, but they are of sufficient interest in themselves to warrant a place here, and in my own mind I am convinced that the consideration of them largely influenced the chief of the Irish Criminal Investigation Department when he was called upon to testify before the Parnell Commission.

Information reached Mallon that Edward McCaffery, one of the committee of the "Invincibles," had received a cheque for twenty pounds, and had had it cashed by the

wife of a publican at a place it is not necessary to further identify than to say it is in the County Armagh. McCaffery was a Monaghan man and knew the chief detective "fine," as they say in that part of the world. The mysterious cheque in question was drawn by Patrick Egan, who, amongst other things, was the treasurer of the Land League, and Mallon could not for the life of him discover what business relations existed between McCaffery and Egan to justify the passing of such a sum of money from the one to the other. At the time the discovery was made McCaffery was in custody for complicity in the Park murders, and Mallon had some delicacy in forcing himself upon the suspect in prison. A ruse had therefore to be resorted to. The publican whose wife had cashed the cheque called at the prison to see McCaffery, and had an interview with him. I am altogether oblivious as to what took place at that meeting, but I know this, that shortly afterwards McCaffery asked to see Mallon and suggested the reason was that Mallon was "a friend of his." The crafty servitor of the "strong arm" provided himself with "lashins and lavins"—in the strange vernacular in which the story reached me—of whisky and tobacco, and hastened to keep the appointment. The reunion was undoubtedly as genial and merry as it is possible to suppose such occasions can be made within the frowning grey walls of a prison waiting-room, but all I was ever able to extract from Mallon as to the outcome of it was "*he told me a lot of useful information.*"

The second incident I have referred to was this: After —I think it was—the third time Joseph Brady had been called before Mr. Curran and examined by Mallon, and subsequent to the catechizing of Curley, which had caused the latter to say: "Mallon ought to be the magistrate and not Curran," the active spirits of the "Invincibles" held

an informal meeting to discuss the situation. The gathering took place at a public-house in Prince's Street, which runs down beside the General Post Office and ends in a *cul-de-sac*, where is the *Freeman's Journal* office. Brady and Curley were there, as well as others, and, happening to pop in quite casually, there came to them Patrick Egan. Conversation, of course, turned on the Star Chamber investigation, and Brady expressed the undoubted belief that it was "all up with him." Mallon had the rope round his neck for certain, was his opinion. Mallon knew the whole business as well as any of them there, and all he was looking for now was an informer. The question, and the only question worth considering, so far as Brady was concerned, was how far Mallon had imparted his knowledge to any other person? There was only one thing to be done, to Brady's mind, and that was the "removal" of Mallon. Desperate causes needed desperate methods, and as Brady himself was undoubtedly booked already, nothing mattered much so far as he was concerned. The only consideration worth troubling about was whether the death of Mallon might not give the others a better chance. It was utterly impossible for Jo's prospects to be worse, even if his acts were supplemented by another item of "history-making," so he might as well finish up by being of real service to his compatriots. Egan would have none of it. He strongly denounced the sanguinary proposition and used all the authority he had to absolutely forbid it. Brady had notice to attend for further examination before Curran on the following morning, and as he had to present himself to Mallon at Exchange Court as a preliminary, he could take a knife with him and finish the matter then. In the end Egan extracted a promise that no attempt upon the life of Mallon should be made. If he were "removed," he would

be replaced by someone who would probably prove a less decent fellow and a less conscientious man, and the difficulties of the situation would be increased a hundredfold. That was the duly emphasized opinion of Egan, and he left the others so soon as he had sufficiently rammed it home. The conference went on, however, and other counsels prevailed, the undertaking given to Egan notwithstanding.

Next morning Joseph Brady proceeded to Exchange Court, and as he sauntered up the short passage from Dame Street with his hands in his pockets, he saw Mallon standing on the steps of the detective office. When he arrived within about half a dozen yards of the police officer, Mallon greeted him with a cheery "Good-morrow, Jo! I shan't be wanting you this morning, I'm going to take Bob Farrell instead. You can run off and play." And as he said the last words he threw something towards the fellow. Brady caught the coin in his left hand—Brady was left-handed—murmured a seemingly appreciative "Thank you," turned on his heel and departed.

After Brady had been sentenced to death, he asked to see Mallon in Kilmainham Gaol, not with a view of peaching, for Brady was one of the minority of the "Invincibles" who did not "open their mouths," and he never uttered a word against anyone except James Carey. His object was to thank Mallon for several acts of consideration he had received from his hands, and for the fairness, consistent with his duty, he had invariably shown him. He wished to make himself clear, moreover, that he had not the slightest feeling of ill-will towards the detective who had made him amenable to the law for his dark deeds.

"Tell me, Jo," said Mallon to the convict, "why did you not stab me that morning in Exchange Court when I threw

the half-crown to you and told you to run away and play ? "

" Ah ! sure, Mr. Mallon, the genial way you bid me ' good-morrow ' and tossed the money over as though you'd be glad that I was able to go away and enjoy myself—I hadn't the heart to try and hurt you."

" Well, Jo, I may tell you this, that if you had tried that morning it might have saved you a lot of trouble. For you might have noticed I had my right hand in my pocket as well as you had your left in yours, and I had something in mine as well as you had in yours, and if you had made the slightest attempt to get hold of the knife again after you had caught the silver, or if you had come a couple of steps nearer to me, I would have shot you as dead as a herring."

" For certain, Mr. Mallon, you're the devil himself, for you know everything," was the summary of the situation as arrived at by Brady.

It maybe that my suspicion is not justified by the facts, but I am, and shall remain, convinced that these two incidents had much to do with Mallon's refusal to give evidence before the Parnell Commission. He would have put forward his natural antipathy to enter the witness-box in any case, but I doubt if he would have carried his objection to the length he did had it not been for the considerations I have set out. On his arrival in London, in response to the subpœna, he sought an audience with Sir Richard Webster, as Lord Alverstone, the Attorney-General, who was conducting the case for the *Times*, then was. He explained that there were insuperable objections to his giving evidence. Sir Richard was inexorable.

" But you have no ' proof ' of any evidence I might give," said Mallon, " and I'll give you none."

"I can do without it," replied the Attorney-General; "I know what I want to bring out and I know exactly the questions to ask you."

"Well, I'll not go into the witness-box," declared Mallon.

"I shall call you, on your subpœna, to-morrow morning," said the Attorney-General.

Mallon proceeded at once to the West Strand Telegraph Office and telegraphed to his immediate superior, Sir David Harrel, Chief Commissioner of Police in Dublin. His message was framed in the code in use at the time by the Executive of Dublin Castle, and was to the following effect:

> "Attorney-General threatens to call me on subpœna into the witness-box to-morrow morning. Cannot give evidence. I prefer Waterloo Bridge. It is for you to protect me."

Within an hour or two the reply came, also in the Castle code, and it was pretty much in these words:

> "Go to the Bath Hotel and wait there until I come. Let no one know your address. Coming over by night mail.—HARREL."

The police officer carried out his instructions, and on the following morning Sir David Harrel arrived. After a long conference, in the course of which Mallon enlarged upon the objections to his being put into the box, sufficiently, at least, to justify the Commissioner in adopting heroic measures, the pair of them waited upon Sir Richard Webster. Sir David requested to know what was the meaning of the *Times* summoning his officer to attend. Sir Richard asserted that his evidence was material and

necessary to the *Times* case. "Well, you will not get it," somewhat militantly declared the Chief Commissioner.

The Attorney-General requested that they should wait awhile, and he sent a messenger for Sir Henry James, as Lord James of Hereford was at the time. Sir Henry, who was also briefed for the *Times*, attended the conference and emphatically confirmed the decision of his leader as to the necessity of calling Mallon. I believe I am right in saying that the argument then became somewhat heated, although I have no positive knowledge that there were any very grave inelegancies of language indulged in. However that may be, the final pronouncement of Sir David Harrel was, I am told, very much to this effect: "Mallon is my officer, engaged in secret service, and I forbid him to open his mouth in this case or to give you the smallest assistance. You shall not put him into the witness-box, Mr. Attorney-General. If you call him on the subpœna I will not permit him to answer, and I will take the consequences." Then turning to Mallon, he added: "Mallon, look up a time-table and see what is the next train to Holyhead. We'll get back to Dublin at once."

Mallon was not called, and did not, of course, give evidence. I am told that the Attorney-General very reluctantly allowed the matter to drop rather than take a course which must have led to endless pother, involving possibly a conflict between the authority of the Viceroy in Ireland and the specially-constituted Royal Commission in England, although he certainly seemed to take the view that the prerogative, granted by the Crown, to "send for persons, papers and records" had been flagrantly flouted.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MAN PROPOSES

I WONDER do the majority of my readers really appreciate the striking contradictions there are wrapped up in the natures of some of the most violent of the Irish peasantry ?

In illustration of the peculiar sentimentality there is to be found in the hearts of even the most embittered and reckless of the submerged masses, a very dear friend of mine, who was one of the keenest wits in Dublin's social life, and who recently passed away under most distressing and tragic circumstances, used to tell the following little story of two cottiers dissatisfied with the conduct of a land agent.

" It was a dark, uncomfortable November night. Michael Dunn and Patrick Feelan were crouching down behind a rugged stone wall that surrounded the chapel. The chapel stood at the corner of a sharp bend in the road about a third of a mile outside a village in County Mayo.

" ' Big bad luck to yez ; lay it a couple of inches more to the left, I tell yez. It's himself that wouldn't trust himself to drive the car after a rint-collecting day. Himself 'll be ridin' on the off side, and it 'ud be a mighty pity to waste the material on Denny Doolan.'

" ' Hould yez whisht, for a cackling ould hen. I've a mind, Denny 'ud be no great loss neither. He's about as big a great blaggard as the other, for drivin' the villain.'

"'End to yez, Paddy. Don't yez see if yez get Denny yez as sure as the nose on yez ugly face to miss the agent, and 'tis himself that's the real prize this night.'

"They had just 'laid' an old 'brown-bess.' At last they were agreed as to the 'pointing.' The elevation and the direction encouraged the belief that the charge would take the off-side occupant of a jaunting-car, coming round the bend, full in the chest.

"There was just enough wind to make a sighing sound as it blew through the few trees that adorned the chapel yard, and to strike a chill if the blood were not kept in active circulation. The air was so pure and all but the wind was so still that the striking of the clock in the sacristy hard by was distinctly heard. The sound of its chimes told them that it was half-past eleven.

"'Are ye sure she's loaded all right, Mickey?'

"'Divil a fear of that. Sure, I looked after *that* departmint meself. She's as chock full of slugs and powder as a pig is of nourishment. There's a slug, or a nail-head, in her for each of the boys, as a keepsake from every mother's son of them for Robert the Racker to take to Kingdom Come along wid him.'

"'I hope he won't be late; me fingers is gittin' froze.'

"Pat Feelan put the dirty fingers of first one hand and then the other in his capacious mouth and breathed hard through them.

"'Give us a dhraw o' that dhudeen and see if it will warm me a bit. Out is it? Bad luck to yez for an omadhaun, Patrick Feelan. Is it bringing the po-lice about us ye'd be doing, by forcin' me to strike a match?'

"'Now: hould on, Mickey, till I'm ready. Keep yez cap over the top of it until I blow it out.'

"The two of them lay down full length on their stomachs. Pat rested his chin upon the soil and abnormally obtruded

his lips, with the dhudeen stuck between them, his greasy, shapeless felt hat, held so as to cover the 'dhrawin'' apparatus. The other concealed his hands, holding a lucifer, within the folds of his equally remarkable headgear, and pressing his wrists to the earth beside the jowl of the other, struck a light. There were a few resonant sucks, like the concluding efforts of a successful pulsometer, and the tobacco in the pipe was lighted.

"The clock in the sacristy chimed the quarter before twelve.

"'I wonder what's keapin' him. Bad cess to him—why wouldn't he be obsarving respectable hours, like any other dacent man?'

"'Have yez annythin' left in that bottle, Michael? Here, take a hould of this, and for the love of goodness don't be after lettin' it out.'

"Patrick transferred the pipe-bowl, with less than an inch of stem on it, from his mouth to Michael's. He withdrew a wedge, of tightly-rolled newspaper, from the neck of the bottle handed to him, and for half a minute there was a slight gurgling, and an occasional gulp. Michael rubbed his grimy hand around all there was of pipe stem, and Patsey performed a similar act of thoughtful cleanliness upon the top of the noggin. The gurgling and gulping sounds were repeated.

"'Do yez think the night air may have damped the cap? It 'ud be a pity if it missed fire after we waited beyant here all this time, on such a night. Better be sure than sorry; I'll put on a fresh one out of me pocket that I know 'll be dry.'

"While Michael removed the percussion-cap, Patsey took to thawing his fingers afresh, and he bent down now and again, and ran his eyes along the barrel of the gun to satisfy himself that no variation was taking place in its

direction—to minimize, as it were, the slightest possibility of mistake.

"'What's that?'

"'Whisht! Be aisy now. It's himself, *at last.* Stand back from me; and keep yer dhirty big head below the level of the wall.'

"'Now, Mickey darlin'; keep up yer heart. Steady yerself, man, and for the love of goodness don't let her go too soon. Wait till the car gets well round the turn. Don't tremble, or it's all up wid us. Here! ye'd better be after lettin' me do it.'

"'Get out o' that, yer blitherin' bosthoon!" hissed Michael Dunn between his clenched teeth. 'I'm as firm as a rock. Have no fear; when I let her speak it's the last voice the rack-rinting divil 'll hear in this wurrl'd.'

"He placed a finger softly, almost fondly, around the trigger and laid his cheek caressingly beside the gun-stock, and shot out a fierce glance along the barrel.

"'Sh—sh! Be ready, Michael, I can hear him slowing down a bit as he mounts the hill beyant the school-house. In another minute he'll be he—— What's that? Holy horrors! don't pull, Michael; don't pull, man—It's only Flannigins' ould grey mare broke loose and galloping up the boreen over there, after all. Ph-ew! That was a close shave. Yez nearly wasted the ammunition that time, sure enough.'

"'Indeed, an' I did that.'

"The sacristy clock struck twelve. So tense was the strain on the nerves of the conspirators that each stroke seemed like the din of an alarm bell that would wake the whole village.

"'Is there a drop still at the bottom o' the bottle, Patsey? Me tongue seems to be sticking in the back of

me throat, and I can't swallow it. There is *not?* Never mind then. I think I have the full of an egg-cup in me own pocket.'

"There was more gurgling and gulping. Patsey brushed away beads of perspiration from his forehead.

"'Sure, it's himself that never was as late as this before.'

"'Be the same token the times were never so bad before, and after bleeding all he can get out of the poor cratures —that ought to be after keapin' them over the winter, respectably—why wouldn't he, with the black heart of him, be sittin' there in Mrs. Donnelley's back parlour, at the "Red Lion," fillin' his carcase with eatin' and drinkin'— just to show his contempt for the sufferin's he's caused. Bad scran to him; may he be as drunk as a piper by the time he gets to that bend there. Thin it 'll be moity certain his own brother, the divil, 'll git him, straight away.'

"The clock in the sacristy chimed the quarter after midnight.

"It seemed to grow even more chilly than before. Patsey flapped his arms across his chest, striking each shoulder alternately, with one or other of his fists.

"'Have yez not another light, Mickey?—Then there's an end to the smokin'. It's a pity yez brought no more liquor; I'm starved with the cold.'

"'If he doesn't come soon we'll have to be postponin' the matin', or we'll not be gettin' Mass in the mornin'.'

"'Perhaps he's nursing his ill-gotten gains under a pillow at Mrs. Donnelley's all night. We'll give him another ten minutes, and if he doesn't come then we'd better make sure of being up for church to-morrow.'

"'If there is anythin' real in what Father Cassidy says about conscience, sure, a villain like Robert the Racker wouldn't be gittin' much sleep after disallowin' Timothy

Gunn more than half a year's abatemint. He might as well have saved the price of his bed at Mrs. Donnelley's.'

"The sacristy clock chimed again.

"Patrick and Michael shuddered, drew up their shoulders and twisted their bodies from side to side so as to rub their flesh against their scanty clothing. Then each of them placed his hands together and blew into them.

"'It's a sorry disappointmint, and great big bad luck," said Patsey, as he removed the percussion-cap and took the gun down from the wall. 'But it's no good waitin' any longer.'

"Patsey lay down on the ground while Mickey pushed the gun barrel far through his trousers' leg so that the butt of the weapon could be brought up again under his waistcoat and fitted into the pit of his arm. Then Michael assisted Patsey to rise and steadied him as he hobbled on to the roadway.

"As they passed the front of the chapel they reverently doffed the pieces of ragged felt that covered their heads.

"Michael Denny paused and gazed back over the road by which the agent should have come, with a far-away and anxious look in his eyes.

"'I *wonder* what can have happened him, Patsey? I hope no harm's come to the poor gintleman.'"

CHAPTER XXIX

CIVIC HONOURS

HAS the public any adequate idea of the struggling and wrestling there is in the City of London over the attainment of "civic honours," as they are usually referred to by the real aristocracy with just the suggestion of emphasis and an almost imperceptible terminal up-tilting of the olfactory organ? Probably the recipients imagine that the flavour of the turtle-soup about them will blow off after a time, but however that may be, I well remember the flutter there was in one little City coterie when Queen Victoria, instead of conferring upon the Lord Mayor a baronetcy—there had been no especial occasion for international high jinks in the City that year—created him a Knight Commander of the Bath. The gasp of astonishment was loud and genuine, and the cause of the amazement was that Her Majesty had gone so far out of her way to treat the City father "as a gentleman."

Whatever their intrinsic value, the fact remains that the competition for these Corporation dignities is hardly less strenuous than Marathon racing. I have rather a generally instructive instance of this that forms a not uninteresting illustration. It was in 1886, a notoriously bad year for "honours." Everything was being saved up for the Jubilee. High feasts and holidays and great municipal functions of all sorts that could be postponed were being put off for the coming period of widespread happiness. It

seemed reasonable that titles and hand-kissings and the like should be hoarded with the rest, so that the deluge of good things might be increased in volume during the year of joy. It was believed that knighthoods would be as plentiful as blackberries in 1887, and prospective mayors of all the Little Puddlingtons had commenced to blow out their chests and consult their cronies as to whether it was dignified to allow "Martha" to be made "me lady," unless the distinction was in such form that it could be passed on to "Hour 'Enery." Chief magistrates and sheriffs, town clerks and recorders of the 1886 hatching were positively kicking themselves over the contemplation of their ill-luck, while embryonic chairmen of town councils, and even of commissioners of sewers, were speculating as to whether "something" might not happen. In this state of things there came to me one James Laidlaw Cross, who had himself been a member of the Common Council of London until the whirligig of commercial "hard lines" had submerged him. At the time I am writing of he still enjoyed a certain amount of favour at the hands of many City fathers by reason of his contributing caustic personalities and criticisms to the columns of a city newspaper. He also wrote occasional leaders for the *Morning Advertiser*. Cross explained that he had been offered one hundred pounds by one of the Corporation magnates, who had an axe to grind, if he could get up an agitation to induce the Queen to hold her Jubilee celebrations in May, 1886, instead of the following year. It was a "large order," but Cross saw at least a hundred arguments why the commission should be accepted. To my mind the expression "get up an agitation," was a little vague and uncertain, and Cross agreeing, we cast about for a definite test. Eventually it was arranged that the evidence of success to be unreservedly accepted by the magnate, whom

Cross always referred to as "the heavy one," was to be the publication of leading articles favourable to the scheme in three London morning papers. My friend had a special conference with the "heavy one," at which he endeavoured to reduce the terms to two favourable comments, mainly because Cross thought he could, in the ordinary course, induce Captain Hamber to allow him to write an article on the matter in the *Morning Advertiser*, and we might well trust to luck that we should be able to put up a sufficiently attractive case to warrant at least one stray article. But the magnate was adamant. The next step was to set about us for a starting point. Naturally we turned first of all to the Biblical authority for the Jubilee, and we found in Leviticus xxv. 8, 9 and 10: "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound . . ." And "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you." The Bible seemed to be with us, and ordained that the jubilee should arrive at the expiration of the forty-ninth year and not at the completion of the fiftieth year, which would bring us up to the commencement of the fifty-first. Then, how about the precedents? We discovered, of course, that the monarchs of this country who had reigned for fifty years and upwards were, curiously enough, the three kings who were the third of their name, Edward III., Henry III. and George III. On examining the records, we ascertained that each of those sovereigns had strictly followed the Biblical definition of a jubilee year, and that they had "sounded the trumpet," so to speak, upon entering the fiftieth year of their reigns, and without waiting

until the full fifty had been accomplished. There had been free wine fountains set up and set aflowing, public processions to the principal places of worship to offer up thanksgiving; there had been gaol deliveries, etc., etc., according to the whims and graces of the monarchs, but they had all demonstrated their gratitude at being allowed to enter upon the year of jubilee, instead of exacting the last moment of the five decades before returning thanks. Certainly the German precedent was against us, for the Emperor William I. had held his celebrations at the end of the fiftieth year of his reign as King of Prussia, but it did not seem to us that such a circumstance ought to outweigh the obvious and immediate fillip that the holding of the Jubilee would give to trade at a time that trade was desperately in need of stimulation.

Broadly speaking, that was the case as it appealed to us, and that was about the best we could make of it. The next consideration was, how were we to bring our views before the public in such a way that they would have a reasonable chance of coming under the notice of Her Majesty? After much cogitation, we came to the conclusion that the best course was to put the idea forward in the interest of the "out-of-works," and the growing necessities of certain portions of the working classes. It will be remembered that there was a good deal of distress in the East End of London during the early part of 1886, and Mr. George Howell was Member for Bethnal Green, where the pinch was being felt as badly as anywhere, at the time. Off we went, therefore, to the lobby of the House of Commons, and sought communion with Mr. Howell. He expressed himself much struck with the strength of our case, and although he had no hope of effecting a change in the Royal plans, he at once recognized the enormous boon that the holding of the Jubilee at the earliest possible

moment would prove to his constituents and to the East-End at large. He had no time, however, to write a letter of the length that the explanations would require, and prepare several duplicates of it. That difficulty was easily got over by the composition and copying of the letter being left to Cross and me. On the following morning we took a number of manuscript letters to the M.P.'s office, and when he had approved and signed them, they were duly posted to the various London dailies. They were a great success and got into print everywhere, except in the columns of the *Times*. Away we went again, so soon as the publication was effected, and succeeded in getting an interview with Mr. Joseph Arch, the sole representative in Parliament at the time of the agricultural labourer. We twitted him that Mr. Howell had got a distinct "bulge" on him by making this suggestion on behalf of the East End working classes, when there was quite as much distress, if there were not more, amongst the labouring agriculturalists of the counties, who would be equally benefited by the holding of the Jubilee rejoicings at once. Mr. Arch quite saw the matter in that light, and consented to save the situation by issuing a letter in support of his colleague, Mr. Howell, on behalf of his especial constituents. There and then, Cross and I sat down in the smoking-room of the House of Commons, into which Mr. Arch had introduced us, and wrote several copies of a short letter on the lines I have indicated. Mr. Arch signed them and they also were dispatched to the Press, and found favour with most of the editors approached. Cross had no difficulty in securing a commission to write an article on the matter in the *Morning Advertiser*, and to our gratified surprise there appeared simultaneously with its publication, favourable leaders in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Standard*. There was the evidence of

the "agitation" fully complete, in far less time than we had in our most sanguine moments thought it possible to bring it about. But nothing came of it. The next step, of course, was to bring these letters and the supporting "leaders" under the notice of Lord Salisbury, and I believe Cross did this, but the only satisfaction forthcoming was a sympathetic letter from his lordship intimating that the Queen could not allow her arrangements to be interfered with. That ended my interest in the affair, and so far as I was concerned, the "agitation" was allowed to peter out.

Cross continued the struggle, in the best interests of the "heavy one," for some time, I believe. He used to tell me how he tried hard to arrange that the Queen should drive the first pile of the Tower Bridge during that particular mayoralty, and when Her Majesty declined to do that, but consented to the Prince of Wales performing the ceremony, how he worked and schemed and plotted that the Prince might represent Her Majesty and might come through the City in state. Each of these propositions was also "turned down," and eventually the present King simply drove to Tower Hill in a closed carriage in his own personal capacity, and accordingly the occasion did not carry "honours" with it. I understood that Cross also got someone who was interested in the Colonial Institute to further his aims by approaching the Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Exhibition was being held in London that year, and the argument put forward was that as there would be great numbers of our overseas fellow-subjects visiting the Mother Country for the South Kensington show, it would be a graceful and a gracious act on the part of the Queen to hold her Jubilee at the same time, so that these ends-of-the-world travellers might be in a position to kill two birds with one stone. And so the game of

struggling to bring about the impossible went on, and all because someone wanted to be able to refer to his spouse as "her ladyship." Eventually poor Cross came to me with tears in his great big eyes and told me that he had been finally "warned off," without having effected his purpose. It appears that Lord Salisbury had written to somebody in the City—I verily believe it was to the Lord Mayor—and had declared that the Queen was much annoyed by recent proceedings there, and that such conduct must at once cease. Cross considerably brightened up, however, when he explained to me that the Prime Minister had written that it was quite evident that someone had been fomenting an "*agitation*" in the City, for what purpose he professed, dear innocent man, he wholly failed to grasp, which was causing Her Majesty considerable pain, and it must be at once suppressed.

CHAPTER XXX

ABOUT " THE FAITHFUL COMMONS "

IF familiarity does not breed actual contempt, it goes a long way in that direction in the case of those who have acquired a long and intimate knowledge of the British Parliament. But the same experience points in no lesser a degree to another of Publius Syrus's maxims : " You should go to the pear-tree for pears, not to the elm."

A simple illustration occurs to me. Should you happen to be walking through one of the lobbies of the Royal Palace of Westminster—and our Parliament buildings are, in fact, a " Royal Palace "—and a black-coated, stove-pipe-hatted person who precedes you allows the heavy, spring-worked doors to crash back upon you, it is safe to assume that he is a Member of the House of Commons. On the other hand, should the stranger hold the doors until you have a chance to handle them in your turn, or even until you are through, you may say : " Thank you, my lord," for it is certain that you have struck upon a Peer.

Membership of the " popular " chamber seems to carry with it the privilege of being rude without question to all who work for Parliament, and the atmosphere of the place is so impregnated with arrogance, and there exists such a plethora of examples of snobbery, that even the mildest-mannered " candidate " rapidly falls into line once he succeeds at the polls.

I am in a position to speak of the pin-pricks to which those are subjected whose destiny or necessities lead

them to serve the Mother of Parliaments, because for some time I was editor of the "Parliamentary Debates," which is commonly called "Hansard." By the way, one might easily think that the "editorship" of the "Debates" implied a misnomer or consisted of a sinecure, but it is neither. The scheme for the production of "Hansard" before the two Houses commenced to do the work for themselves, authorized, on the one hand, the boiling down of speeches until the residuum was either wholly important or interesting, except in the case of the plutocracy of the "talking shop," who are lumped up as Ministers and ex-Ministers. Then, on the other hand, by way of topsy-turvying that eminently sensible arrangement, the contract provided that members should be permitted to revise the "proofs" of their own utterances—which they did by re-habilitating all the ornamental verbiage which had been judiciously eliminated, and by adding much that had not been spoken at all, if there were any apparent possibility of turning the delivery into an essay. It was just the men who ought to be cut down who spent hours in writing up their speeches, and it required the constant vigilance of an editor and several assistants to see they did not tamper with any foolishness they had been guilty of—there is plenty of it in the House of Commons—and at which the House had laughed; that they did not work off platitudes on posterity which their modesty, or their timidity, or—more likely—the temper of the House had prevented them inflicting upon that particular assembly, at all events. I remember the case of one gentleman in particular, who in a speech after dinner had made some observations which were considered to be an undue reflection upon the conduct of the Crown. Mr. Gladstone had jumped up in a tremendous heat of virtuous indignation and castigated the honourable member, and Mr. Speaker Peel had severely

rebuked him from the Chair. When the report appeared in type the member came to me, declaring he had never said the things attributed to him, and attempted to bully and browbeat me into leaving them out. He even threatened to bring my conduct before the House if I refused him, and this notwithstanding that to leave him out would have made the remarks of Mr. Gladstone altogether ridiculous and uncalled-for, and have rendered the Speaker's "ruling" altogether pointless and inane. I had to seek the protection of the Speaker, and as Mr. Peel kindly initialled the proof for me as being entirely accurate, the lapses of the honourable gentleman were duly preserved for those who may care to search for them. On another occasion the late Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett sent me a printed slip of a three-column speech he had failed to floor the "faithful Commons" with, because it was late at night when he attempted it and the House had successfully howled him down. My editorial instincts prompted me to carefully mislay the precious document as the most reasonable and least ostentatious way out of the difficulty. Poor Ashmead-Bartlett fumed and flustered, but it was too late once the "Debates" was published, so I recommended him to print the whole thing in his own weekly paper, called *England*, which he did, with all the "Hear, hears," "Cheers" and "Laughter," it ought to have evoked.

Yet another source of serious discomfiture to me while I controlled the publication of the "Debates" was the number and persistency of Members of Parliament who failed to use sufficient postage stamps to frank the parcels of "proofs" they returned to me. This matter became such an intolerable nuisance and such a considerable expense that I had to determine upon reprisals. I waited for one particularly militant member, who, by the way, has just been re-elected to the House. He was always

talking, and he used to give me a lot of trouble with his so-called "corrections." This was all the more amazing, as he was a really busy man in private life, and he must have spent hours and hours every week in re-dressing his scratchy spoutings in such extremely showy bibs and tuckers that they will probably immortalize him as a rhetorician if some "gems of oratory" merchant comes along in the sweet by and by. At last an unusually extensive package arrived containing the "pulls" of many speeches, and as there was quite an unreasonable amount to pay for "excess postage," and as I recognized the handwriting, I returned it through the Dead Letter Office. A couple of days afterwards the parcel was redelivered with an intimation that if I knew what the contents were I would probably pay. I explained that it was precisely because I could guess what the little lot contained that I would not put my hand in my pocket, and the wrangling went on until it was too late to use the decorated proofs. Then there was a fearful to-do. I was carpeted before the Secretary to the Treasury and threatened with all sorts of pains and penalties, not the least terrible of which was that my conduct should be brought up in the House on the Stationery Vote. Then it became my turn, and I produced a list of the sums I had paid in this way during the time I had been in my position, together with the names of the delinquents. This list, I suggested, I would place at the disposal of some friendly member, and when Mr. Robert Hanbury discovered that I had no less than *five ex-Postmasters-General* "on the list," he thought we had better let the whole matter slide. The incident had one useful effect, however, for Mr. Hanbury forthwith entered into arrangements which meant "free postage" for such enclosures and for much else connected with the "Debates."

One of the immeasurably small things that I have known

members of the House of Commons to do when they have been anxious to oblige a certain lobbyist, and the fact that they have "given their word" has been a stumbling-block, was worked in this way. I believe the lobbyist I have in mind was the inventor of the scheme, for it could not have occurred in any natural way to the considerable number of gentlemen I have known practise the dodge. It would be a document that was in question—a chairman's draft report, or some confidential paper that the member had been entrusted with. The lobbyist would ask to see it. "Quite impossible," the member would reply, and as he turned away he would deliberately drop the precious paper. A little later it would be anonymously returned through the post office in the Lobby as having been "picked up in the corridor" and "seeming to belong to Mr. So-and-So." And the member was always able to lay his hand upon his heart and say he had not given or shown his copy of the document to anyone, neither had he explained its contents to a single soul.

When it is not one's *amour propre* that is outraged by the doings in the People's House, it is one's appreciation of the fitness of things or one's sense of proportion that is shocked. A polite American once said to me: "Your Mr. Arthur James Balfour puts his feet on the table. Nor does he confine this unusual practice to his own private room and his own bright particular centre-piece of furniture. The Right Honourable Arthur James Balfour, breed of the ancient Cecils, Premier Minister of Queen Victoria, puts his feet upon the table at which the Speaker of the House of Commons presides, in full view of the whole House and of the Peers and distinguished strangers, the diplomats and the ladies. Think of it! The reckless bravado and the flouting of universal etiquette involved is emphasized by the fact that to 'get there' he has to

slither down on the cushioned bench until the nape of his neck rests upon the oak frame of it, where his back ought to be; the middle of his spine occupies the actual seat. The position is not only inelegant, it is shocking to the tender susceptibilities of all who have regard for what you Britishers call the amenities of polite society." I positively blushed when confessing the justice of the criticism, and I do not believe that my earnest efforts to explain that there were "supposed" to be no witnesses of these things except members themselves, and anything was good enough for them, "cut any ice," as my Yankee friend would have said. I went the length of pointing out that within my recollection if anyone only hinted that there were strangers present the whole of the galleries were instantly cleared. But I could not help thinking that there were other considerations besides those mentioned by my friend which I have pleasure in presenting to the right honourable gentleman. Here is one of them, at least. Visiting the Ladies' Gallery for the first time, my own little daughter exclaimed, in a voice representing the infantile supreme effort to convey the maximum of sensitive disapprobation: "How *can* a Prime Minister put his feet on the table? Where *can* he have been brought up? *Even* father wouldn't do it—if he had such horrid, big, flat feet!" I ask Mr. Balfour, how was it possible to chide the child when, the next time she was being "shown off," she startled a coterie of unexceptionably prim females by depositing her feet amidst a maze of bric-à-brac and triumphantly announcing that she was "pretending it was Parliament and she was the Prime Minister"?

Writing of my American friends who have visited the House of Commons reminds me of the following interesting incident:

One of the British managers of the American Line of steamships once asked me to pilot a couple of United States merchant princes through the legislative assemblies here. There was a full-dress debate set down for the Commons, and the oratorical panjandrums were in their war-paint. All the seats in the public galleries had been allotted days before, and so many tickets had been issued for the "Members' Gallery" that holders of them had to ballot for the limited number of places available. My Transatlantic charges were, of course, without permits, and they had no time to wait for a later sitting that would be less crowded, as they were on the move towards Paris and Rome and Vienna. That afternoon I saw two Cabinet Ministers denied accommodation for their friends in the "Speaker's Gallery" on the "all full" basis. That was where the subtlety of the mere penciller, with a profound appreciation of the frailness of human nature and a passing knowledge of Parliamentary attendants, and door-keepers in particular, found a scope for the exercise of social diplomacy. It has always appeared to me that the first question in the examination test of reporting aspirants should be: "Given a strictly private meeting to which the public and the press are absolutely refused admission, how would you get in?" The American travellers, one of whom, by the way, was introduced to me as the head of a world-widely known firm manufacturing a domestic machine which is considered indispensable to the outfit of a truly thrifty housewife, secured seats in the gallery reserved for "Distinguished Strangers," and subsequently remarked without the slightest affectation that "it was good enough for them." But the incident I started off to narrate in connection with these two gentlemen came later and speaks volumes for the esteem in which our aristocracy are sometimes held even by the proud bantlings of great

and glorious democracies. We perambulated the Terrace and lounged awhile in the smoking-room, where we smiled across tokens of mutual good wishes with several genial Irish members, and then it was suggested that my charges would like to see the "Gilded Chamber." The House of Lords was sitting, and there was plenty of room in the places allocated to visitors. There is generally plenty of room in the Upper House for the reason that their lordships have no constituents to worry them for admission tickets—and due to the circumstance that they have no constituents to pose before, there is generally plenty of room on the Peers' benches also. But my usual method failed. The friendly janitor feared the eagle eye of that superior official dear to the heart of the cartoonist, who generally depicts the back view and makes it forcibly resemble a blackbeetle. The latter was prowling about in dangerous proximity to the entrance by reason of his having some lady friends there. By the way, the "superior official" is dressed entirely in black, with scanty white lace ruffles, with satin knee breeches and the perfection of most expensive calves encased in shimmering black silk. He wears a sword by his side, which is about as substantial as a good-sized bodkin, and is, presumably, intended as an instrument for keeping refractory earls and dukes in order. He also carries a curious little sealing-wax-like stick in his hand, tipped with gilt ornaments, which no man knows the use of, and none have ever seen used except it be to bang against the door of the House of Commons when conveying them a message from the Peers to "request their attendance in the House of Lords to hear a Royal Commission read"—which message was for centuries framed that the Lords "required" the attendance of the faithful Commons, until the latter kicked, thus demonstrating the growth of democratic sentiment in these monarchial realms. This lofty and

costly adjunct to the dignity of the Upper Chamber is called "The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod." There is also a "Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod," and although he also is a most "extensive" person, he is but the second fiddle, so to speak. There is, further, a Sergeant-at-Arms, who looks pretty much the same, but his relative position is that of the 'cello. All this is a digression, however. My bright particular Cerberus gave me a form to fill up and suggested that I should get some noble lord to sign it in favour of my friends. I hastily wrote the names and addresses of the two Americans on the paper, and at that minute I saw the young Duke of Marlborough, who had not long been married to Miss Vanderbilt, approaching. His Grace, with the greatest affability, allowed me to lead him to the stand-up desk there is in the ante-chamber to "the Lords," and there he attached his signature to my order form. Now, in this document the hereditary legislator "vouches" for the person in whose favour the document is drawn, and it may be taken generally that a person is respectable, trustworthy, *sans peur et sans reproche;* in fact, "all right," as one may say, when he is guaranteed by the plutocrat who represents one the highest and oldest of the dukedoms in the British realm. By way of demonstrating the importance of the voucher, here is a *facsimile* of it:

"ADMIT THE BEARER————————————
of————————————, who is vouched for by me, to the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Lords, on————the————day of————.

"*Signature*————————————

"*Date*————————

"*Signature of Bearer*————————————"

"And is that the genuine signature of the *real* Duke of Marlborough that married the daughter of our W. K. Vanderbilt?" my companions asked me, and on being assured of the correctness of the proposition, one of them continued: "And the Duke of Marlborough kind of personally goes bail for us, as it were? Do we have to give up that paper when we go into the House of Lords?"

Of course I explained that it was the "open sesame" to the Gilded Chamber, and that it would be taken possession of by the janitor as his authority for admitting them.

"Then I guess we don't want to see any gilded chambers," came the firm decision, "for we're just going to take that piece of paper right back with us to show the people at home."

And straight away they proceeded to submit the possession of the little document, which I had altered so as to include both their names and addresses, and in which the *real* Duke of Marlborough personally "vouched" for them, to the arbitrament of what a Frenchman is said to describe as "*la toss.*"

It is difficult to realize how supremely petty some truly great politicians and diplomats can elect to appear in the ordinary amenities of every-day life. These things are never worth relating unless they are discovered in the ordinary daily dealings of the "master-minds," so to speak—the leaders and the rulers of men. We laugh at the foibles of our maiden aunts and encourage them as harmless and amusing idiosyncrasies; when we fall across them in serious, busy business men we marvel.

My hero in this particular case was a brilliant and rising young statesman. Both great parties of the State hung with deference upon the solid arguments and gems of advice that flowed in elegant and eloquent diction from

his self-reliant and aristocratic lips. He had recently led to the hymeneal altar one of America's fairest—and wealthiest—daughters, and the world wondered that he was so favoured by the gods, and even more so at the profundity of his wisdom. And all the world was right, for within a very brief space of time young Fortune's favourite had attained one of the highest positions it is possible to hold in the service of the British Crown. In my official capacity it was my duty to submit to the right honourable gentleman printers' proofs of the gracious words that fell from him in the House of Commons, and in this connection I had had the misfortune to fall under his displeasure. He had personally written me a letter of complaint. Before I had time, however, to inquire into the matter, I was summoned before the Secretary to the Treasury—the gentleman to whom I was directly responsible. Mr. Hanbury informed me he had received a complaint from an influential source that I had been guilty of the heinous offence of sending out a proof "so wet as to be positively disagreeable." Ye Gods! what a terrible crime to move the chief officers of State upon!

Fortunately Mr. Hanbury declined to tell me the source of the indictment, and as I made it an invariable rule never to answer anonymous complainants, the matter was allowed to drop. Of course I assured the representative of the Treasury that had I the name of the incommoded one, I would find the caitiff wretch who dared damp the paper before pulling a proof and take him by the throat, and I would in future take care to have complainant's particular proofs printed on cream-laid, gilt-edged note-paper. Furthermore, I would personally attend to the airing of them; and if Mr. Hanbury would trouble to discover the particular perfume the irate politician affected at the moment, I would see to the rest.

Mr. Hanbury laughed. He guessed I had scented the complainer.

It was the habit of this same young statesman to walk through the lobbies of the House of Commons with a highly-scented handkerchief to his nose—a custom that gave much offence to the self-made members with whom he came in contact during his perambulations, while those who represented the Sister Isle regarded the affectation as another, and a very distinct, injustice to Ireland.

CHAPTER XXXI

"PARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE"

IN a long experience of Parliamentary journalism the greatest of my difficulties has always been to discover whence the hackneyed expression "Parliamentary language."

The more you think of it, the deeper you delve into examples, the more difficult it becomes to define "Parliamentary language" with any assurance of correctness. We have been taught to regard the term as conveying all that is decorous and desirable in speech, and it is the justification of the tuition that is so very puzzling. Inelegance of phraseology hardly requires lofty reference to the example of our legislators to prohibit its use in polite society, and if the expression is employed as an admonition against the administration of really hard verbal knocks, the most casual inquiry exposes the explanation as utterly frivolous.

It is perplexity begotten of research that induces these reflections.

Perhaps the easiest way of arriving at a conclusion upon the knotty point will be found in a review of some pungent efforts, and expressions, of badinage, contempt, persuasion and invective that have passed muster amongst distinguished Parliamentarians of the past. By the contemplation of the positive it is sometimes possible to arrive

at a remote idea of the negative. And it must be borne in mind that the most startling examples of pronounced disfavour coming within the prescribed proprieties have generally come to us from celebrated and able statesmen, rather than from political nonentities in search of the line of least resistance to notoriety. Otherwise they would lose in instructiveness.

In the course of an almost ferocious attack upon Wellington and his Ministry in 1830, Lord Brougham, always to the fore when there was the slightest semblance of excuse for oratorical fisticuffs, warned the "Iron Duke" that in this country, as in France, the day for force was over, and that he who would rule his country by an appeal to Royal favour or military power might be overwhelmed, might be hurled down, by it, if he should entertain such an idea. And he added, with a considerable display of dramatic emphasis: "I in no way accuse him of such an attempt—him I accuse not—I accuse you; I accuse his flatterers—those mean, paltry parasites——" The frenzy ended there, for somebody intervened and the balance of the sentence was drowned in the indignant howls of the Ministers against whom it was being hurled. At an even earlier period this admittedly great repository of law and equity and genuine ornament of the Woolsack declared that George Canning "had exhibited a specimen, the most incredible specimen, of monstrous truckling for the purpose of obtaining office that the whole history of political tergiversation could furnish," and probably no more scathing reference was ever made to a man in Parliament than the same Chancellor's allusion to Lord Liverpool. "No Minister," he said, "ever passed his time with so little ill-will directed towards himself—had so much forbearance shown him on all occasions. Nay, few engaged uniformly so large a share of personal esteem. To what did he owe

the rare felicity of his lot? This question may, perhaps, be answered by observing that the abilities of Lord Liverpool were far more solid than shining, and that men are apt to be jealous, perhaps envious, certainly distrustful, of great and brilliant genius in statesmen. Respectable mediocrity offends no one."

Daniel O'Connell's declaration that Benjamin Disraeli "possessed just such qualities as the impenitent thief who died on the cross, whose name I verily believe must have been Disraeli," although accepted by most statesmen of the time as coming within the amenities of ordinary political warfare, very nearly led to a duel. Disraeli challenged the "Liberator," who, however, was precluded from accepting by a vow he had taken after his fatal encounter with D'Esterre. At the same time Morgan O'Connell offered his services as a kind of substitute for his father, but the only effect of his politeness was to enable "Dizzy," with an equal display of courtesy, to decline to thrust upon him "the vicarious duty of yielding satisfaction for the insults which your father has all along lavished with impunity on his political opponents," and privately he added that while his quarrel was peculiarly with the sire, he could not conceive how he was to obtain satisfaction through allowing himself to be riddled with lead by the offspring.

Later on, Sir James Graham, with an affectation of perfect good humour, assured Disraeli that "I regard him as the Red Indian of debate. By the use of the tomahawk he has cut his way to power, and by the recurrence of the scalping system he hopes to prevent the loss of it."

If he was much criticized, ridiculed and depicted in many forms and colours in his young days, however, Disraeli, all through his career, was well able, and fully disposed, to retaliate in kind. It is doubtful, indeed, if any politician

ever indulged more frequently, or more successfully, in rhetorical wrestlings than he. Many of his castigations are historical. His memorable attack upon the then Government with which he concluded a trenchant speech in 1846, although more sweeping in its generalities was scarcely less effective than those to which he was himself subjected. His words gain an additional interest from the fact that they came from the lips of one destined to be the future leader of the very party he so strongly denounced. By way of peroration he declared: "For myself I care not what may be the result. Dissolve if you please the Parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the people who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this, at least: the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that the Conservative Government is an organized hypocrisy." In the course of the same year he expressed the opinion, in regard to the Corn Importation Bill, that his countrymen "will not long endure this huckstering tyranny of the Treasury Bench—those political pedlars who bought their party in the cheapest market and sold us in the dearest."

In 1851, Colonel Sibthorp spoke of a portion of the Queen's speech as "a mass of trickery, trash and trumpery," and expressed the pious hope that the Queen would speedily escape from the "fangs" of her then Ministers.

Criticizing Lord Palmerston's foreign policy, Lord Aberdeen used the expression "old women," and "Pam" at once retorted that "Public men ought not to deal in egotism, and I will not apply to them the expression that has fallen from their own mouth. I will only say that the conduct of such men is an example of antiquated imbecility." As a retort courteous, however, that observation positively pales before a reply once made by Lord Brougham to an inquisitive member of the House of Com-

mons. Sir Edward Sugden, afterwards Lord St. Leonards, had moved for an inquiry into certain matters in which the famous little lawyer was directly interested. The latter addressed the House of Lords in these words: "My lords, we have all read that it is this Heaven-born thirst for information and its invariable concomitants—with a self-disregarding and candid mind—that most distinguishes man from the lower animals; from the crawling reptile; from the wasp that stings and from the wasp that fain would but cannot sting—distinguishes, my lords, not only from the insects which crawl, but from that more powerful, because more offensive, creature the bug, which, powerful and offensive as it is, is after all but vermin. Yes, I say it is this laudable propensity, upon which humanity justly prides itself, which I have no doubt solely influenced the learned gentleman to whom I allude to seek for information it would be cruel to stingily gratify."

Referring to an attack made upon him by Lord Randolph Churchill, in the debate on the Irish Land Bill of 1881, Mr. Gladstone delivered himself in these terms: "There are in creation certain small animals whose office it is to bite, which are able to produce a sense of irritation in the victim; and there are other small animals whose office is to bite but who do not even produce in their victim the sensation that he is actually bitten. I must say that as far as the comparison can be made with the speech of the noble lord, it reminds me rather of the second class of animal than the first."

Lord Beaconsfield's denunciation of Gladstone represents, perhaps, the most remarkable sentence in English political history. The Member for Midlothian had referred to the Convention of Constantinople as an "insane convention," and, subsequently, at Knightsbridge, Beaconsfield asked

the following question: "Who do you think most likely to enter into an 'insane convention,' a body of English gentlemen honoured by the favour of their sovereign and the confidence of their fellow subjects, managing your affairs for five years, I hope, with prudence, and not without success, or a sophistical rhetorician, inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, and gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign his opponents and glorify himself?"

Sir Ralph Bernal Osborne, expressing the opinion that Lord Palmerston and his colleagues were a little past their time and that they "bungled" a little, suggested that if they wished to put the country in a proper position with foreign Powers and restore the just influence of England, it might easily be done by their imitating the custom which was obligatory on unsuccessful officials in Japan. "If, sir," he said, "they would enact the modified form of 'happy dispatch' which we have learned from the Asiatics, I am sure this country would at once regain its proper position."

Sir William Harcourt was another Parliamentary hard-hitter, and a noteworthy sample of "Parliamentary language" was delivered by him in 1885, when it was rumoured that the Conservative party was proposing to ally itself with the Home Rulers. He said: "The Liberals must not be in a hurry to turn the Tories out. He would let them for a few months stew in their own Parnellite juice, and when they stank in the nostrils of the country, as they would stink, then the country would fling them degraded and disgraced to the constituents and the nation would pronounce its final judgment upon them." Another severe thrust of the late Liberal leader was directed against Lord

Randolph Churchill, when he said: "It is difficult to understand to which of the four parties of the State the noble lord belongs. He once belonged to his own—the Fourth Party—but he has managed by his conduct to dissolve that party, and his feat in that respect only affords a fresh illustration of the infinite divisibility of matter."

Certainly the most terrible denunciation of one of its own members that our modern House of Commons ever listened to was delivered by Mr. W. E. Forster against Mr. Parnell. He affirmed that the leader of the Land League was the acknowledged chief of an organization which not only urged boycotting "which was to make life more miserable than death," but organized outrages and incited to murder. He continued: "I will repeat again the charges I make against him, and probably no more serious charge was ever made by any one member of this House against another. It is not that he himself directly planned or perpetrated outrages and murders, but that he either connived at them——" but the rest of the terrible indictment was lost in a perfect pandemonium of dissent and fierce contradiction on the one hand and noisy support and approval on the other, which only ended by certain units of the Irish party being dealt with in the usual way.

These are but as drops to the ocean compared with the available fruits of research. No wonder bewilderment besets the sober effort to define "Parliamentary language." May be, after all, it merely depends upon the avoidance of vulgarity—that almost equally indefinable something that follows the fashion and the vogue of the times. Certainly, in the House of Commons, you may call a man anything you have a mind to, provided you do not confine yourself to terse, crisp, meanful Saxon words—so long, in fact, as the indictment is surrounded with much particularity.

Years ago the sitting Member for Radnor used an expression, *sotto voce*, indicating that an Irish member who was speaking was deficient in wisdom, an opinion that he fortified with a prefix which could, at best, or worst, be regarded as a mere prophetic reference to the honourable member's possible condition in a future state. He was severely rebuked, and he was much confused at the time, but to the end of his political career he remained persuaded that the House had not really quarrelled with the obvious truism he had hurriedly ejaculated—that it was only his blunt and straightforward way of expressing himself that had handicapped him and that the Speaker had cavilled at.

CHAPTER XXXII

SAVING SECONDS

VERY few of the outside public appreciate the strenuous efforts that are made by newspapers to save an odd second or two in conveying items of news to them. In these days the manipulation of the electrophone and of wireless telegraphy are staggering, but we were none the less earnest in our efforts even before science had done so much to help us.

Imagine the trouble and expense of laying a special cable in the bed of the Thames in the wake of the Oxford and Cambridge crews with the sole object of saving seconds in presenting the public with a descriptive account of the Boat Race. The pioneer of the news agencies, Mr. William Saunders, actually caused a cable to be payed out from the stem of a river steamer as it followed the contestants from Putney to Mortlake. Subsequently it had, of course, to be picked up again on the return journey. The idea was to telegraph direct to Ludgate Circus a report of the 'Varsity struggle as it went along. That the effort was not attended with a great amount of success was no fault of its originator. It was due to the circumstance that from the nature of its mission the "cable transport" had to bring up the rear of the procession of steamers allocated to the umpire, the general body of the Press, and the partisans of each University. True, the special scribe on the miniature *Great Eastern* caught an occasional glimpse

of the perspiring sixteen as they rounded a bend. But, speaking generally, all he saw to describe was the dim outline of the larger craft in advance, now and then popping out from a mass of dense, black, eyes and lung-filling smoke.

However, the enterprise and speculation of Mr. Saunders were there and provide a slight object-lesson of the lengths and the expense the purveyors of news are prepared to go to be the first to tell the world something the world wants to know. Indeed, there is probably no business or profession in this universe where the crucial importance of seconds is so magnified as it is in newspaper journalism. And this applies all the more forcibly to that department in the world of Fleet Street which has to do with the transmission of "results" to the printing headquarters, in the first instance, and thence to the public. The "result" may be the verdict in a murder trial, the capture of the Turf's blue-ribbon at Epsom, the declaration of the poll at a parliamentary election, the best aggregate in the "King's shoot" at Bisley, the finish of an aquatic struggle, a "knock-out" in the prize ring, the rescue of "ashes," or what not; the rush to be "first in the street" is always the same. The best possible idea of the value of saved seconds in this business is to be derived when the agencies "go a-travelling" in the month of November and canvass the country for fresh orders and the renewal of past favours. What St. Thomas shall continue to doubt when he sees the glee with which Mr. Central News announces that he was first by fifteen seconds with the figures in the Muddlebury election? Who shall hesitate to believe in face of the dignified insistence of Sir Press Association that the decision to place an impost upon canned goods was "handed in" at the post office by his representative exactly half a minute before the similar messages of his rivals? What

can be more conclusive than the strident tones of triumph in which Ticking Tape, Esq., declares that St. Amant's name was grinding and griddling out of his machine fully seven point thirty-six seconds in advance of any other news-distributing instrument? These are actually the kind of circumstances which are urged in favour of one news service over another, and they are impressive as their instincts guide the editors appealed to. The traveller succeeds as the appreciation of the editor is the better tickled by the ponderous oratory and obscure economics of Parliament or the more invigorating potentialities of the "sport of Princes."

In the old days the Boat Race was very frequently seized as an occasion for the news agencies to "lay themselves out" to "get first." I can well remember the frantic efforts of an erstwhile colleague, who is now one of our world-renowned war correspondents, and myself on one occasion. The prospective "world-renowned" one was entrusted with the manipulation of extensive flag-signalling arrangements on the north side of the river, while I was detailed to conduct a certain strategic movement on Barnes Bridge—with a view of frustrating the designs of the enemy. It all happened in this wise. One of the great sporting combinations had arranged to signal the "result" from Barnes Bridge to the travelling telegraph office, which takes up a position opposite the "Ship" at Mortlake, by the use of a double-barrelled fowling-piece. It was quite usual to anticipate the judges' decision when the crews had got no further than Barnes Bridge, and occasionally so soon as they had come in sight of that point. One barrel was to represent the success of the light blue and a double discharge was arranged to herald the victory of the darker tint. I should explain, by the way, that one of the chief excitements of these happenings was the

keenness and anxiety with which, for weeks before the event, scouting was indulged in to ascertain the arrangements of one's rivals, so as to be in a position to dish them, or "go them one better." On this occasion our tactics were only partially successful. Oxford was winning, so the enemy's signal rang out bang! bang! I immediately unmasked an additional and unexpected battery from a large brown-paper parcel and blew off a third bang! which utterly confused the scribes awaiting the signal on the telegraph van. It had the effect of inducing them to seek safety in delaying their telegram until the crews actually came in sight, and they could satisfy themselves as to the winning boat. Had the Light Blues been in the van my added bang! would probably have secured the sending of the *wrong* message by the "opposition," which would have been a complete triumph for us. Although, therefore, the strategy was not wholly successful, the conspiracy of the flags, *plus* the surreptitious battery, handsomely beat the fowling-piece.

On another occasion one of the agencies erected a telegraph wire all along the towing-path from the start to the finish, and described over it the progress of the event from every notable point of the course. The "other end" of the line was fixed at the travelling telegraph box, and we and all their other rivals expressed ourselves green with envy at the adequacy of their arrangements, and apparently retired from the contest. The "result" that year was dispatched over their private wire from a point far below Barnes Bridge, and at least seven and a half minutes before the leading boat had passed the winning-post. But the special wire-ists did not "get first" after all, for the interest I represented had taken the precaution of posting a Morse telegraph clerk at the window of the telegraph van, and he read—by sound, of course—every word that came over

that "private" wire. As a fact, the enterprising manipulators of the exclusive telegraph line were just "beaten a short head" by the still more enterprising firm who commandeered the fruits of all their outlay and elaborate preparations.

When Sergeant Mackay, 1st Sutherland Highlanders, won the Queen's Prize, I myself caused a special telephone wire to be laid across Wimbledon Common from the telegraph tent to the firing point. There was considerable difficulty in obtaining the permission of the council for the exploitation of the scheme, but thanks to the efforts of our friend the war correspondent and Colonel Buller—as the gallant General then was—both of whom had only just returned from the first Egyptian campaign, I was eventually successful. It took a small army of sappers to protect the line as it lay uncovered over the bare common, but with its assistance we managed to beat all other newspapers and agencies by about three minutes, and that was considered a most notable performance and quite sufficient justification for all the pother and expense.

The advent of the halfpenny morning press has been signalized by an entire revolution in the amount of importance exhibited in the minutiæ of Parliamentary proceedings—from a reportorial point of view. Whether this is due to the exigencies of space or to a want of proper respect on the part of the bantlings of the Fourth Estate for the heavy fathers of debate, it is not for me to say. Suffice it that the elect of the people and the favoured of the gods, engaged in talking statutes and tariffs, obtain but scant courtesy at the hands of the modern Press, except on occasions when, by reason of their backslidings or eccentricities, they become really interesting. Nowadays the legislative assemblies are judged solely by the importance of their measures or the entertaining attributes of their

men, rather than by that special glamour which used to attach to mere membership of the "best clubs," or "talking shops," as they are variously described. In the very recent days that are dead things were far different. The whole scheme of journalistic enterprise was wont to centre around Parliament and Parliamentarians. The importance and dignity of the penny papers used to be estimated by the length and accuracy of their parliamentary reports, and all that was best and brightest on their reportorial staffs was turned on to such enthralling material as could be provided by Mr. Galloway Weir on the restricted elbow-room allotted to Scottish crofters or by Mr. Love Jones-Parry on the toothsomeness of rook pie. The evening papers vied with each other in their efforts to bring the proceedings of the "faithful Commons" up to the latest possible moment before going to press, and the "tape-worms"—as the mechanical news-distributing instruments were styled in those days—spluttered and groaned and bubbled in their efforts to beat each other with the dissemination of the momentous information that Mr. Wharton was "still speaking," or that Mr. Bowles had twitted the Government with want of proper interest in the religious training and physical culture of the Rhodesian aborigines. Such was the competition, in fact, that the organization I represented in that Mecca of reportorial journalists, the Press Gallery of the Commons, provided me with a kind of brass coffee-pot arrangement on my desk within the very precincts of the House itself. In reality, it formed one end of a pneumatic tube, at the other extremity of which a telegraph clerk sat in a cupboard at the foot of the stairs leading out into Palace Yard. As each announcement of the slightest moment was made, it was my duty to dash it down on a slip of paper, jamb it into a chunk of baize-covered gutta-percha tubing, and

then and there dump it in the "coffee-pot," close the lid and press an electric bell. Then there came a weird sound from within the "coffee-pot," as though some unhappy infant were being throttled. Members on the floor of the House below would irritably exclaim: "Sh!" the Sergeant-at-Arms would scowl up at the gallery with an expression of indignant horror at the sacredness of the popular chamber being outraged by such uncanny noises; the ladies behind the "gridiron" above would crane their necks to catch a glimpse of the domestic tragedy they were perfectly satisfied was taking place somewhere at hand, and Mr. Speaker would command: "Order, order!" in his most severe and authoritative tones. Then there would come an almost equally gruesome tapping of a tiny hammer on a lump of boxwood, which was substituted and did service for a bell, and which indicated to me that my message had been successfully sucked to its destination and was in process of being telegraphed around to all the clubs and most of the evening papers in London. That scheme constituted a most laudable effort to economize time in the conveyance of Parliamentary news to the public, but owing to its eccentricities and the disadvantages I have indicated, it had a short and not over glorious existence.

In the seemingly hazardous anticipation of Iroquois winning the Derby the Central News and their co-workers on "the other side," the American Cable News Co., ran a special telegraph wire to the top of the grand stand at Epsom and connected it with a line that went direct into the operating-room of the Anglo-American Cable Co. in the City, so that there should be no seconds—or even half-seconds—lost in the transmission of the news of what after all was a mere horse race, to New York and hence throughout the whole continent of America.

As I have indicated, subterfuge frequently enters into the business of dispatching "result" messages. Many are the tricks that have been tried to obtain an advantage with the verdict, aye or no, in a sensational murder trial at the Old Bailey, and particularly when the jury has been in so much doubt that the final editions of the evening papers have been delayed in the press to await their finding. Perhaps the most successful ruse was worked in this wise—it never "came off" but once, for the representations that were made to the City fathers on its initiation were both loud and bitter: A certain reporter placed a fleet-footed messenger, with his nose glued to the *grille*, at the door opening from the court to the corridor and within full view of the press-box. The resourceful scribe arranged to display a sheet of black carbon paper in the event of the verdict being "guilty," and a white handkerchief to indicate the contra decision. The boy was armed with alternative messages addressed to "all services" of the agency—which meant almost every receiver of telegraphic news in the United Kingdom. On getting the arranged signal he was to make all conceivable haste to the telegraph office with the "form" which fitted the verdict indicated. All that was simplicity itself. The other part of the arrangement, and that upon which the triumph of the scheme mainly depended, was the insurance of complacence on the part of the gentlemen in blue upon duty at the various exits from the court. It was duly agreed, however, that their special mission, for the nonce, was that his lordship should not be "disturbed" in passing sentence by any unseemly noise or disorderly hurry-skurrying; that no one was to be allowed to leave the court, in fact, until after the prisoner had been actually removed from the dock, whatever the verdict. Accordingly the boy at the grille had a clear and extremely satisfactory start in the race for the post office.

Then, again, there used to be quite an industry round and about Altcar in the rearing of homing pigeons in preparation for the rapid dispatch of "result" messages during the annual Waterloo Cup coursing meeting. And a few years back there was almost as profitable a business organized by the youth of the same locality, which consisted in the cultivation of an intimate knowledge of the particular birds belonging to certain trainers and the development of the necessary skill to "pot" them from behind a hedge or from the seclusion of a ditch when they were nearing their cotes with the "result" messages of the rival interest to that which employed the budding marksmen.

Our war "special" risked his life and was fired at again and again in the effort to "get first" with war news. He was stalked and "potted" at, and nearly fell a victim to his enterprise during his perilous ride through the stragglers of Arabi Pasha's defeated army from Cairo to Suakin to secure a "beat" with the news of the capture of the Egyptian capital.

Indeed, it may be said that as every sporting event provides evidence of strenuous effort to dispatch "results" in one way, so does every campaign in which British journalists are interested, supply it in another. Where the eagerness for priority in the announcement of "results" will end it is impossible to say. Probably the latest development is the establishment of a wireless telegraph system between certain racecourses and the *Evening News* office; but whatever the further progress of the competition, I have surely written enough to give a slight idea of the importance of seconds in the distribution of "results" to the public with an insatiable thirst for early information.

CHAPTER XXXIII

OUR FOREMOST DIPLOMAT*

AS a master in the art of winning the complete affections of all with whom he is brought in contact, His Majesty King Edward VII. is without a rival. It is rather with regard to his appreciation of the newspaper Press, however, that I am concerned at the moment. If in demonstrating the existence of the latter some clue is given to the attractiveness of the most thoughtful of monarchs towards all who remotely come within his sphere, these lines will have served the additional purpose of exhibiting, if only in a poor, inadequate degree, an inextinguishable sense of gratitude and pleasurable memories which have remained with me during the score of years and more since I travelled in the wake of the then Prince of Wales through Ireland.

Lord Macaulay it was who wrote that "the gallery in which the reporters sit has become the fourth estate of the realm," and still later I heard Mr. Disraeli tell a handful of farmers at Aylesbury that he was not really talking to them at all, but "through these gentlemen" (the reporters) "I am addressing three hundred millions of English-

* Since this chapter was "made ready" for the press an infinite grief has gripped the British race.

King Edward VII., further ennobled by the spontaneous acclamation of humanity as "The Peacemaker," has been taken from us—cut off in the fullness of his glorious and immortal work.

The well-beloved of a great people, he was their affectionate and solicitous father.

On May 6th the British Empire lost a precious Sovereign, and the whole world, civilized and uncivilized, was deprived of its best friend.

Blessed, indeed, my country if she ever "look upon his like again."

speaking people all over the world." In like manner King Edward has great regard for the functions of the Press, and he is deeply sensible of the importance attaching to the happenings of State affairs being accurately described for those who are not so fortunate as to be present and also for posterity. Accordingly, he has ever been insistent upon the utmost consideration being given to the comfort and convenience of the Press—and how well he has personally ensured the carrying out of his wishes was exemplified in the tiny acts of kindliness and grace which marked the occasion of the ceremonial tour I allude to. It took place during the turbulent times of 1885, and few of the dozen or so journalists who were privileged to accompany the then Prince of Wales through Ireland will readily forget the keen joys associated with the trip and the pleasurable incidents experienced by all who came under the immediate influence of his presence.

Before the journey commenced doubts were expressed as to the character of the reception the royal party would receive. Ireland, it must be remembered, was still suffering from the ravages of coercion associated with the Land League agitation; the shadow of the "Invincible" conspiracy and the Phœnix Park murders was still black upon the land, many heartless evictions were taking place, a "no rent" manifesto had been issued, and a system that produced incalculable suffering, called "The Plan of Campaign," was at the time in full swing. Once the Prince landed on Irish soil, however, the wonderful charm of his unique personality, none the less than the fascination and attractiveness of his Consort, asserted itself, and the warmth of the acclamations in his favour was no longer in question. True, there were occasionally found along the railway routes a few isolated black flags hung out, but as a rule

they were regarded with the utmost good humour, and the desire was conveyed to the chroniclers that no undue emphasis should be given to the few evidences of thoughtless hostility. Indeed, in the case of "rebel Cork," where there was some serious attempt made in the direction of organized opposition, by a well-timed and graceful act of strategy the spontaneous admiration and applause of even the most rebellious of the masses were so completely won that many were convinced that had the visit lasted another couple of days we might have found Cork petitioning for the erection of a royal residence and vying with Windsor for pride of place in its expressions of loyalty.

It is very generally known that the King—and this applied to him more especially when he was the Prince of Wales—does not, as a rule, commit himself to extemporaneous speeches. Indeed, it would hardly serve the purposes of what we are pleased to call a constitutional form of government if he did. The diplomatic possibilities that might become very considerably mixed—and probably would, in some instances, very much for the better. The social problems that might receive royal sanction although utterly opposed to the important political exigencies and the interests of those who represent—and just as frequently misrepresent—the views and aspirations of the electorate are too numerous for me to find space for. Accordingly, whenever a speech was likely to be necessary, it was carefully prepared by the secretary, in the case of the Prince of Wales, and he usually read it, although it frequently happened, if the necessities of royal punctuality were in any peril, he merely bowed his acknowledgments to the address, or whatever it might be, and handed his reply to whoever appeared primarily interested, on a scroll. So it was on this Irish tour. All the speeches the Prince of Wales was to deliver during the three weeks

of his sojourn in the Emerald Isle were carefully prepared before he set foot in the "most distressful country," and were actually "set up" in the *Irish Times* office before the royal party left Dublin, and were handed out to the pressmen in "proof" form as and when occasion required. That is how it came about that there was a considerable flutter in the dovecote when the visitors arrived at the navy yard of Haulbowline and found there a truly royal luncheon provided for two thousand people which was not "in the programme." Of course, the Prince had to make a speech, and, equally of course, he was nothing daunted, although nothing had been prepared for him to say. There was no hesitation or nervousness about the Prince of Wales. All that sort of thing was the immediate perquisite of the private secretaries and equerries and the "conductors" of the royal outing—if the expression is permissible—and of the Royal Consort, whose obvious anxiety that the Prince might get beyond his depth—in a political sense—was most marked. The moment he rose to address the vast audience the Princess caught the extreme edge of his coat-tails so unobtrusively as to be unnoticed by all but a few who were paying very particular attention, and at the close of almost every sentence she gave a gentle tug at them, as though to say, "That will do—that is a quite suitable peroration." But the effect of that speech, the single extempore effort of the entire tour, was the most electrifying of the whole series, and created a far grander impression than all the rest put together—at least, in so far as the Irish people were concerned.

I must recall the circumstances. The royal party left Cork in the morning by boat, and while embarking a considerable section of the populace gathered on the opposite side of the river. To the accompaniment of all kinds of instruments, some musical and some otherwise—the

majority were distinctly otherwise—they chanted, rather than sang, the words of the song that has come to be regarded as a kind of Irish Anthem, "God save Ireland, said the Martyrs." The song was written by Mr. T. D. Sullivan to the tune of "Tramp, tramp, tramp! the boys are marching" and was supposed to represent the sentiments of the men who were convicted of the murder of Sergeant Brett and have since been spoken of as "the Manchester Martyrs." In this case, assisted by the beating of trays and cans, the chanting forcibly reminded those on board the royal barge of Henry Carey's description of similar attempts in his "Chrononhotonthologos."

> "The singing singers
> With vocal voices, most vociferous
> In sweet vociferation out-vociferised
> Even sound itself."

Be that as it may, the only words the Prince of Wales managed to gather were those at the commencement: "God save Ireland." In his extemporaneous speech he referred to the demonstration on the opposite side of the river at Cork and said he had asked what the people were singing. He was proud to adopt the words of the song. He pledged himself that there was no one in Ireland at that moment who more fervently, from the bottom of his heart, repeated the words "God save Ireland" than did he.

The effect of that little speech was simply terrific and completely won over the hearts of even the most rebellious of the "brave boys of rebel Cork."

On leaving Haulbowline the Prince was told a characteristic incident that happened in Cork the night before. "Are ye for the Prince?" demanded "a broth of a boy," of an inoffensive, innocent stranger gazing in a shop window, who, knowing the mixed state of public opinion,

replied that he was a traveller and no partisan. "Are yez agin the Prince?" insisted the native, by way of ringing the changes, to which the would-be diplomatist murmured something to the effect that he had not had time to go into the merits of the case and had not yet formed any very definite opinion. "By gob! ye're not taking sufficient interest in our local affairs," triumphantly decided the genial Shaughraun, as he brought his "come-all-ye" down with startling effect upon the headgear of the other. From which it was pretty evident that the traveller "had to have it" any way.

The Prince was much amused with the story and inquired as to the exact nature of the weapon referred to by such a strange term. When it was explained that it was the Cork man's affectionate appellation for his faithful blackthorn stick with which he invited all and sundry to "come on" in the game of "nut-whacking," and of which there was an extensive sale on the Queenstown landing-stage, he expressed a desire to acquire one. And when some of the ladies of the Princess's suite were assured that the lace handkerchiefs, being sold side by side with the blackthorns by the female hawkers, were usually bought by the colleens to tie up the fractures produced by the "come-all-yes," they too opened their purse-strings.

It is said, but this must not be taken as an implied voucher for the statement, that His Majesty still treasures that "come-all-ye," and that it has an honoured place in his collection of the weapons of offence of all nations.

THE END

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